ISLAMIC CREED SERIES • 5

THE FINAL DAY

THE MINOR RESURRECTION

(What Happens After Death)
In the Light of the Qur'an and Sunnah

القيامة الصغرى

Dr. 'Umar S. al-Ashqar

الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي
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IN THE NAME OF

ALLAH

THE ALL-COMPASSIONATE, ALL-MERCIFUL

THE MINOR RESURRECTION

(What Happens After Death)

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, the Lord of the Universe. May His blessings and peace be upon the last of the prophets and messengers Muhammad, his family members, Companions and all those who follow his footsteps till the end of time.

Ma'ad or Hereafter is the third of the three-part Islamic Dogma. *Tawheed* (monotheism), *Risaalat* (messengership) and *Ma'ad* (Hereafter). The author, after discussing the first two parts of the creed - the oneness of God, and the Messengers and Messages - delves into the subject of the Final Day/Hereafter. He has divided it into three parts, "Minor Resurrection" (What happens after Death), "The Day of Resurrection" and "Paradise and Hell". This book deals with the first phase of the concept of the Hereafter. Dr 'Umar Sulaymaan al-Ashqar, as usual, has discussed this issue exhaustively, based on the texts of the Qur'an and the Sunnah and the highly acclaimed and renowned writings of our pious predecessors. A number of editions of the Arabic original have been sold out. This speaks of the popularity of this noble work.

We are pleased to publish it in a number of languages in order to acquaint our readers with the significance of this important aspect of Islamic belief. This is the English version rendered by brother Naasiruddin al-Khattaab who translated his other works also.

May Allah bless with acceptance the efforts of the author, the translator and all those associated with its publication.

Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Muḥsin Al-Tuwaijri
General Manager
International Islamic Publishing House, IIPH
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

What happens after death? Doctors and scientists are able to describe in detail what happens to the body once death has occurred, but what happens to the essence, the soul, the person who dwelt in that body? This is a question which concerns many, of all backgrounds and walks of life. Many have tried to answer this question, producing theories that range from the fanciful to the nihilistic. But man-made notions cannot answer questions about matters which man has no way of seeing. No-one has ever come back from "the other side" with a scientific report on what really happens.

In this as in so many other issues, Islam brings us answers. Surely the One Who gives life and takes it away, is the One Who is the best to inform us of what happens after death. He has informed us about these matters, in His Book and through His last Prophet (ﷺ). Death is acknowledged to be a difficult matter, and so we are instructed to seek refuge with Allah from the trials of death as well as of life. We are also informed of what will take place after death, including the questioning of the angels and the torment of the grave, and Islam offers us the comfort of being able to seek Allah's protection from that torment.

Death is only one part of the future that concerns us. Human beings have a fascination with the future, as is apparent from the proliferation of soothsayers and fortunetellers. Although the Prophets have warned mankind repeatedly that consulting such charlatans is *ḥaraam* (and harmful), they have exerted an influence over people down throughout history. In contrast, Islam tells us about the future just that which we need to know. For example, we are told that the Hour (the Day of Judgement) will certainly come, but we are not told

when. This knowledge is all we need to know, so that we may continually strive to be prepared to meet our Lord. The believers have always had this sense that the Hour is imminent, from the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) until the present day.

We do not know when the Hour will come - for even the Prophet (ﷺ) was not granted this knowledge. But we have been told of the signs and portents which will herald its coming. Many of the minor signs have already come to pass, or are happening now. Learning about these signs helps us to make sense of a world that sometimes seems to be going out of control. When we see that events and trends fit the pattern described in the Qur'an and *aḥaadeeth*, we understand that there is a plan and a purpose, and that Allah is in control of the universe.

In this book, Dr. 'Umar al-Ashqar examines all these issues from the point of view of the Qur'an and Sunnah. As always, he quotes extensively from the texts, placing these issues squarely within an Islamic framework and dispelling the myths and misunderstandings that have arisen and become prevalent.

May Allah reward the author for sharing his deep knowledge with the ummah, and may He cause this book to be of benefit to all who read it.

Naṣiruddin al-Khaṭṭaab

INTRODUCTION

Praise be to Allah, the giver and taker of life, the One Who puts the souls into the bodies and takes them, the One Who created us from dust and returns us to it, and when He wills, He will bring us back from the dust and will resurrect us.

And I send blessings and peace upon the Chosen Prophet who spoke at length about death and how difficult it is, about the Day of Resurrection with its horrors and terrors, about the Fire and its torment, about Paradise and its delights; who woke people from their negligence, rid them of their confusion and pointed them in the right direction.

And I send blessings and peace upon his pure family and noble Companions, and those who follow them in truth, those who live in this world whilst their hearts long for the Hereafter, so they strive for that eternal abode, and this is how they continue until they meet their Lord, so may Allah be pleased with them.

We have been brought to this life by the will of the Giver and Initiator of life, and we leave this life when the One Who gave us the soul decides to take it away. People come and others go. They are like the waves of the sea which come one after another; every time a wave crashes upon the shore, another wave follows it. They are like a running river which you see flowing constantly, but the water which you see in front of you now is not the same water which you saw just a moment ago. They are like a field of plants which is always green; whenever something in it dies, something else grows. They are like a panel illuminated with hundreds of thousands of candles; you see it always shining, but when we look closely at it we discover the secret

behind its continual light, that is, whenever one part of the wax burns out it is replaced by another.

But this long and ongoing human existence will come to an end one day. There will come a day when all of human life will come to a halt, and indeed the entire universe will be destroyed. All the stars will be extinguished and the waves of the sea will come to a standstill. All vegetation will shrivel and die, and the rivers and springs will dry up. But this destruction will not be the end; it is only one of the stages that man will go through. There will come a day when we will all be brought back to life, to account for our previous deeds.

The belief that we will be brought back to life for eternity is essential to correct man's course. For in the depths of his heart, man has a love for immortality and eternal life. Hence *Iblees* (Satan) tempted Adam to eat from the tree of which he had been forbidden to eat, by claiming that eating from it would grant him and his wife eternal life:

﴿فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ قَالَ يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَىٰ شَجَرَةِ ٱلْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَّا يَبْلَىٰ ١٢٠﴾

﴾Then *Shayṭaan* [Satan] whispered to him, saying: 'O' Adam! Shall I lead you to the Tree of Eternity and to a kingdom that will never waste away?'﴿
(Qur'an 20: 120)

Disbelief in the resurrection brings misery to human souls and causes mankind to deviate from his intended path in this life.

Some of those who reject the idea of being brought back to life wail and lament, the fact that their life is diminishing with every moment that passes. This may lead them to isolation and pain until death takes them. If they are writers or poets, they record their feelings of grief over their lives in articles, books or verses which embody their misery, confusion and pain, to offer consolation to those who are in

the same situation. But in fact this only increases their suffering and makes the sick person even more sick, and it does not bring any healing. Some of those who disbelieve in the resurrection hasten to make the most of physical pleasures, as if they are racing with time and are afraid that their days will come to an end before they have had their fill of life's pleasures.

The short period of our existence in this world is extremely important with regard to the next life. The way to eternal happiness which leads to eternal life in the abode of eternity depends on our achieving real perfection in ourselves and in others. This perfection, which purifies our souls and corrects our deeds, has a clear foundation which has been explained by the Messengers and in the divinely-revealed Books.

Because the connection between this life and the life of the Hereafter is so strong, such that this life is like ploughing and sowing, and that life is like reaping and harvesting, man needs to know enough about his life in the Hereafter in order to make him prepare for it and live his life in this world in a manner that will bring him good in the life of the Hereafter.

Because the life of the Hereafter is unseen, the veil cannot be lifted from it even by people with sharp minds and deep insight, let alone those who have less insight. But Allah has told them where they will go after this life, and has informed them about their inevitable course. Mention of the life of the Hereafter is mixed with mention of this life because the two are interconnected, so that souls may be set straight and reformed in a world where many creatures, human and jinn alike, are striving to mislead people and take them far from the right path.

The information which Allah has provided us about that unseen Day when we will meet Him cannot be referred to in hints and symbols. It must be spoken of clearly and in detail, in such a way that man will be

encouraged to have firm faith (*yaqeen*) with no element of doubt. Whoever looks at what we have compiled in this book about the Last Day will see abundant quotations from the Qur'an and *ṣaheeḥ* Sunnah, which give a detailed picture of many of the things that will happen after death and on the Day of Resurrection.

The resurrection is something unseen, but it is true. This would not be the case if the reports about it were not correctly attributed to Allah and/or His Messenger (ﷺ). Hence in this book I have ignored the reports whose isnads are not *ṣaheeḥ* and cannot be proven to have come from the Messenger (ﷺ). I have also ignored the methodology of those who reject the idea of accepting *ṣaheeḥ* (authentic) *aḥaadeeth* if they are *aḥaad*.

I have also rejected the method of those who twist the meanings of the texts, those who took their minds as judges to judge the texts and who turned things in reverse order and made the judge subject to judgement. They went astray and led others astray. In some cases they went so far as to reject many issues of the Hereafter which are proven in *ṣaheeḥ* reports, based on rational analogies which, had they examined them closely, would have realized their absurdity. Had they pondered the matters of the Hereafter in any depth, they could realize that the Hereafter is a different world, and that the standards and measures of the Hereafter are different from those of this world.

We have discussed this important dogmatic principle - one of the basic Islamic doctrine, at length. We divided it into three topics, each of which is dealt with in a separate book:

1. *Al-Qiyaamah aṣ-Ṣughra* (the minor resurrection, i.e., death) and the signs of *Al-Qiyaamah al-Kubra* (the greater resurrection, i.e., the Day of Resurrection)

2. *Al-Qiyaamah al-Kubra*, i.e., the Day of Resurrection

3. Paradise and Hell.

This is the first book, and is composed of two sections, as indicated by the title. The first section discusses *Al-Qiyaamah aṣ-Ṣughra*, i.e., death. So this section deals with death and its terrors and stupor; the grave and its trials, blessings and punishments; then the soul and its fate in *Al-Barzakh*.

The second section deals with the signs of the Hour (the Doomsday). There are many Signs which point to the approach of the Hour, some of which are major and others are minor. Some of the minor signs have already come and gone and some have not yet happened. The major signs have not happened yet. This section will discuss all of that.

Finally, I ask Allah to make this book of benefit, and to make it purely and sincerely for His sake. May Allah send blessings and peace upon His slave and Messenger Muhammad, and upon his family and Companions.

Dr. 'Umar Sulaymaan al-Ashqar

SECTION ONE

Al-QIYAAMAH AṢ-ṢUGHRA

(THE MINOR RESURRECTION, i.e., DEATH)

CHAPTER ONE
DEFINITIONS

The stage which every person must go through after the life of this world is given a number of names, such as *Al-Qiyaamah aṣ-Ṣughra* (the minor resurrection), *al-Barzakh* (interval) and *al-Mawt* (death).

We will discuss these three names in some detail below.

1 - Definition of *Al-Qiyaamah aṣ-Ṣughra*

Al-Qiyaamah aṣ-Ṣughra (the minor resurrection) is death. Everyone who dies goes through this "resurrection" when his appointed time comes. Both Bukhari and Muslim narrated that 'Aa'ishah (ﵣ) said: "Bedouin men used to come to the Prophet (ﷺ) and ask him about the Hour, and he would look at the youngest of them and say,

> 'If this man lives, he will not reach old age until your hour comes.'"[1]

Ibn Katheer said: "It meant the end of their generation and their entrance into the Hereafter. For everyone who dies is considered to have passed into the Hereafter. Some people say that the one who dies has embarked upon his resurrection. In this sense these words are correct."[2]

Ibn Katheer indicated that this view is also held by the philosophers, but they meant something that is invalid and unacceptable. The atheists mean that death is the end and that there is no resurrection after that. Ibn Katheer said: "Some of the atheists and the heretics may

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[1] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 3/48

[2] *An-Nihaayah* by Ibn Katheer, 1/24

believe in that, but they mean something else and that is false. As far the Great Hour is concerned, it is the time when the first and the last (of the people on earth) will be gathered together in one arena, and the time of this is something which is known only to Allah."[3]

Al-Qiyaamah aṣ-Ṣughra is also called *al-ma'aad al-awwal* (the first appointed time) and *al-Barzakh* (interval).

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "Death is a resurrection and a first appointed time." Allah has made two appointed times and two resurrections for the son of Adam, in which those who did evil will be requited for what they did, and those who did good will be rewarded with good. The first resurrection is when the soul leaves the body, and travels to the realm of the first requital (reward or punishment)."[4]

2 - *Al-Barzakh* (Interval)

In Arabic, *barzakh* means a barrier between two things. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿... وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخًا ... ﴾

﴾...And He has set a barrier [*barzakh*] between them...﴿
(Qur'an 25: 53)

In shari'ah, *barzakh* refers to the period from death until the Resurrection. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿... وَمِن وَرَآئِهِم بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴾

﴾...And behind them is *barzakh* [a barrier] until the Day when they will be resurrected.﴿ *(Qur'an 23: 100)*

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[3] Opt. cit.

[4] *Ar-Rooh* by Ibn al-Qayyim, p. 103

Mujaahid said: this is what is between death and the resurrection. Ash-Shaa'bi was told that, So and so has died. He said, He is not in this world or in the Hereafter.[5]

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "The torment and blessing of the grave is another name for the torment or blessing of *barzakh*, that is, what is between this life and the Hereafter. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿... وَمِن وَرَآئِهِم بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾﴾

﴾...And behind them is *Barzakh* [a barrier] until the Day when they will be resurrected.﴿ *(Qur'an 23: 100)*

and the people of this *barzakh* can see into this world and the Hereafter."

3 - *Al-Mawt* (Death)

(1) *Al-Mawt* from the semantic point of view

Life and death are opposites, as are light and darkness, cold and heat. Hence, the Arabic language dictionaries define each of them in terms of opposites. The definition of *al-Ḥayaat* (life) is: "*Al-Ḥayaat* (life) is the opposite of *al-Mawt* (death); *ḥayy* (alive) is opposite to *mawt* (dead); the plural of *ḥayy* is *aḥyaa'*."[6]

The definition of death is: "*Al-Mawt* (death) is the opposite of *al-Ḥayaat* (life)."[7] The root meaning of *mawt* in Arabic is stillness; everything that has come to a standstill is dead.[8] So you may hear them say, "*Maatat an-naar mawtan* (the fire has died)" when its ashes turn cold and there are no embers left. And they say "*Maat al*

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[5] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, 177

[6] *Lisaan al-'Arab* by Ibn Manẓoor, 1/774

[7] *Ibid*, 3/547

[8] *Ibid*

ḥarr wal-bard (the heat and cold have died) when they ease off, and "*Maatat ar-reeḥ* (the wind has died)" when it stops blowing, and "*Maatat al-khamr* (the wine has died)" when it goes flat. *Al-mawt* (death) is that in which there is no soul.[9]

If the root meaning of *al-Mawt* (death) in our language (Arabic) is stillness, then movement is the root meaning of *al-Ḥayaat* (life). In *Lisaan al-'Arab* it says: "*Al-Ḥayy* (living, alive) is everything that speaks and utters. With reference to plants, *al-ḥayy* is everything that is fresh and growing."[10] Human life comes about when the soul is breathed into the body of the foetus in his mother's womb, and death "is the severing of the bond between the body and the soul, the change of situation whereby the soul is separated from the body and moves from one realm to another."[11]

(2) Greater death and lesser death

Sleep is akin to death, hence our scholars called it the lesser death. Sleep is a death, and waking from sleep is a resurrection.

﴿وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يَتَوَفَّىٰكُم بِٱلَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِٱلنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ ... ﴿٦٠﴾﴾

﴾It is He, Who takes your souls by night [when you are asleep], and has knowledge of all that you have done by day, then He raises [wakes] you up again...﴿

(Qur'an 6: 60)

During sleep, people's souls are taken, then if Allah wishes to keep a person's soul whilst he is asleep, He does so, and if He wills that a person should remain alive, He returns his soul until the appointed

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[9] *Lisaan al-'Arab*, 3/547

[10] *Lisaan al-'Arab*, 1/773

[11] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, 4

time which He has decreed. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿ٱللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى ٱلْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَٱلَّتِى لَمْ تَمُتْ فِى مَنَامِهَا ۖ فَيُمْسِكُ ٱلَّتِى قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ ٱلْأُخْرَىٰٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ... ﴿٤٢﴾﴾

﴾It is Allah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death, and those that die not during their sleep: He keeps those [souls] for which He has ordained death and sends the rest for a term appointed...﴿ *(Qur'an 39: 42)*

Here Allah tells us that both souls, the one which He keeps and the one which He sends back, die the death of sleep, but those which die in reality (i.e., their life in this world comes to an end) form a third group. This group is referred to at the beginning of the *aayah*: ﴾It is Allah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death...﴿ *(Qur'an 39:42)*

Allah mentions two deaths, the death which signals the end of life, and the death of sleep; He mentions that He keeps the souls of those who are to die and He sends back the others.

It is known that He takes the soul of everyone who dies, whether they die in their sleep or before that, and He sends back the souls who do not die. The verse ﴾It is Allah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death...﴿ *(Qur'an 39:42)* includes both those who die whilst awake and those who die in their sleep. When He mentions the two souls who die, He says that He takes the one and sends back the other. This is the apparent meaning, and there is no need for further discussion."[12]

(3) Death is inevitable

Death is inevitable for every living creature; there is no escape from it, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

[12] *Majmoo' Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam*, 5/452

﴿... كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُۥ لَهُ ٱلْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾﴾

﴾...Everything will perish save His Face. His is the Decision, and to Him you [all] shall be returned.﴿ *(Qur'an 28: 88)*

﴿كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو ٱلْجَلَٰلِ وَٱلْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

﴾Whatsoever is on it [the earth] will perish. And the Face of your Lord full of Majesty and Honour will remain forever.﴿ *(Qur'an 55: 26-27)*

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ ٱلْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فَمَن
زُحْزِحَ عَنِ ٱلنَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا مَتَٰعُ
ٱلْغُرُورِ ﴿١٨٥﴾﴾

﴾Everyone shall taste death. And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception [a deceiving thing].﴿ *(Qur'an 3: 185)*

If anyone were to have been saved from death, the best of Allah's creation - Muhammad (ﷺ) - would have been saved from it:

﴿إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُم مَّيِّتُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾

﴾Verily, you [O' Muhammad] will die, and verily, they [too] will die.﴿ *(Qur'an 39: 30)*

Allah consoled His Messenger with the news that death was His law decreed for His creation:

﴿وَمَا جَعَلْنَا لِبَشَرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ ٱلْخُلْدَ أَفَإِيْن مِّتَّ فَهُمُ ٱلْخَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾﴾

﴿And We granted not to any human being immortality before you [O' Muhammad]; then if you die, would they live forever?﴾ *(Qur'an 21: 34)*

Death is inevitable for humans and jinn. In *As-Saheeh* it is narrated from Ibn 'Abbaas (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> *"A'oodhu bi 'izzatika alladhi laa ilaaha illa anta allaadhi laa yamoot, wal-ins wal-jinn yamootoon* (I seek refuge in Your Glory, besides Whom there is no other god and Who never dies, whereas men and jinn will die)."

(4) There is an appointed time for death

There is a destined time for death. It will come in time. No one can go beyond the appointed time which has been set by Allah. Allah has decreed the life spans of His slaves. It is written with the Pen in *Al-Lawh al-Mahfooz*. The angels write (and have written) whilst a person is (and was) still in his mother's womb. No man can delay or bring forward what has been written for him. Every person who dies, or is killed, or drowns, or falls from an airplane or car, or is burned to death, or dies for any other cause, dies (and has died) at the appointed time decreed by Allah. Many texts indicate this. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَن تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ كِتَٰبًا مُّؤَجَّلًا ... ﴿١٤٥﴾﴾

﴿And no person can ever die except by Allah's Leave and at an appointed term...﴾ *(Qur'an 3: 145)*

﴿أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا۟ يُدْرِككُّمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنتُمْ فِى بُرُوجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ ... ﴿٧٨﴾﴾

﴿Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!...﴾

(Qur'an 4: 78)

﴿وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ۝﴾

﴾And every nation has its appointed term; when their term comes, neither can they delay it nor can they advance it an hour [or a moment].﴿ *(Qur'an 7: 34)*

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقِيكُمْ ... ۝﴾

﴾Say [to them]: 'Verily, the death from which you flee will surely meet you...'﴿ *(Qur'an 62: 8)*

﴿نَحْنُ قَدَّرْنَا بَيْنَكُمُ الْمَوْتَ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ ۝﴾

﴾We have decreed death to you all, and We are not outstripped,﴿ *(Qur'an 56: 60)*

In Muslim it is narrated that 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood said: 'Umm Ḥabeebah (ﷺ), the wife of the Prophet, said: "O' Allah, let me enjoy my husband the Messenger of Allah, my father Abu Sufyaan and my brother Mu'aawiyah (i.e., do not let them die before me)."

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "You have asked Allah about a time which is appointed and days which are numbered, and provision which is already shared out. Allah does not hasten to do anything before its appointed time, and He does not delay anything until after its appointed time. If you had asked Allah to protect you from the torment of Hell and the punishment of the grave, that would have been better.'"[13]

(5) The time of death is not known to us

People have no knowledge of the time when death will come to them. That knowledge belongs to Allah Alone, and it is one of the keys of

[13] Muslim: *Kitaab al-Qadr*; Aḥmad; 1/390, 413, 445

the unseen, the knowledge of which Allah has kept to Himself. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿۞ وَعِندَهُۥ مَفَاتِحُ ٱلْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَآ إِلَّا هُوَ ...﴾

﴾And with Him are the keys of the *Ghayb* [all that is hidden], none knows them but He...﴿

(Qur'an 6: 59)

﴿إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلسَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ ٱلْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْحَامِ ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى نَفْسٌۢ بِأَىِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌۢ﴾

﴾Verily, Allah, with Him [Alone] is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs. No person knows what he will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he will die. Verily, Allah is All-Knower, All-Aware [of things].﴿

(Qur'an 31: 34)

Bukhari narrated in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* that Ibn 'Umar reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"The keys of the unseen are five, and no one knows them except Allah.

﴿إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلسَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ ٱلْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْحَامِ ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى نَفْسٌۢ بِأَىِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌۢ﴾

﴾Verily, Allah, with Him [Alone] is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs. No person knows what he will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he will die.

Verily, Allah is All-Knower, All-Aware [of things].﴿

(Qur'an 31: 34)."[14]

Aḥmad, Tirmidhi and others narrated that a group of the *Ṣaḥaabah* reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "When Allah wants to take the soul of a person in a certain land, He causes him to have a need there."

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[14] Bukhari: *Kitaab al-Istisqaa'* and *Kitaab at-Tafseer*

CHAPTER TWO
THE MOMENT OF DEATH

1 - The Coming of the Angels of Death

When the appointed time comes and a person's life is drawing to a close, Allah sends the messengers of death to bring forth the soul which is controlling and moving the body.

﴿وَهُوَ ٱلْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَ أَحَدَكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ
تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ﴿٦١﴾﴾

﴿He is the Irresistible [Supreme], over His slaves, and He sends guardians [angels guarding and writing all of one's good and bad deeds] over you, until when death approaches one of you, Our messengers [angel of death and his assistants] take his soul, and they never neglect their duty.﴾ *(Qur'an 6: 61)*

The angels of death come to the believer in a beautiful form, and they come to the *kaafir* and the hypocrite in a frightening form. According to the hadith of Al-Baraa' ibn 'Aazib, the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

"When the believing slave is about to depart this world and move to the Hereafter, angels come down to him from the heavens, with white faces like the sun. They bring with them a shroud from Paradise and aromatics (for embalming) from Paradise, and they sit in front of him as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death (ﷺ) comes and sits at his head, and says, 'O' good soul (according to one report, 'O' peaceful soul), come out to forgiveness from Allah and His pleasure.'

> Then it comes out like a drop of water from the mouth of a jug, and they take it...
>
> But when the disbelieving slave (according to one report, immoral slave), is about to depart this world and move to the Hereafter, angels come down to him from the heavens, (harsh and severe) with black faces, bringing sackcloth[1] (from Hell). They sit in front of him as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death (ﷺ) comes and sits at his head, and says, 'O' evil soul, come out to the anger of Allah and His wrath. Then it cowers within his body and is dragged out like a (many-hooked) iron skewer passing through wet wool (with which veins and nerves are cut).'"[2]

We cannot see what happens to the dying person at the point of death, although we may see its effects. Allah has told us about the state of the dying person:

﴿فَلَوْلَآ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ ٱلْحُلْقُومَ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَأَنتُمْ حِينَئِذٍ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنكُمْ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾﴾

﴾Then why do you not [intervene] when [the soul of a

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[1] This refers to cloth woven of hair which is worn for purposes of mortification of the flesh. (Author)

[2] Shaykh Naasiruddin al-Albaani compiled all the narrations of this hadith and combined them into one version comprising all the additional phrases which were narrated in all the various *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnads. See *Aḥkaam al-Janaa'iz*, p. 59. He attributed it to Abu Dawood (2/281), Al-Ḥaakim (1/27-40), Aṭ-Ṭayaalisi (no. 753), Aḥmad, (4/287, 288, 295, 296 - this version was narrated by him), Al-Aajirri in Ash-Shari'ah (367-370). Al-Ḥaakim said: (it is) *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of the two shaykhs (i.e., Bukhari and Muslim), and Ad-Dhahabi agreed with him, and it is as they said. It is classed as *ṣaḥeeḥ* by Ibn al-Qayyim in *'Alaam al-Muwaqqi'een* (1/214) and *Tahdheeb as-Sunan* (4/337), where he narrated that it is classed as *ṣaḥeeḥ* by Abu Na'eem and others.

dying person] reaches the throat? And you at the moment are looking on, But We [i.e. Our angels who take the soul] are nearer to him than you, but you see not,﴾

(Qur'an 56: 83-85)

What is referred to here is when the soul reaches the throat as a person is dying, and the people around him can see what is his suffering of the stupor of death, even though they cannot see the angels of the Most Merciful who are pulling out his soul. ﴿But We [i.e. Our angels who take the soul] are nearer to him than you, but you see not.﴾ *(Qur'an 56: 85)*

And Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَهُوَ ٱلْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِۦ ۖ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَ أَحَدَكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ﴿٦١﴾﴾

﴿He is the Irresistible [Supreme], over His slaves, and He sends guardians [angels guarding and writing all of one's good and bad deeds] over you, until when death approaches one of you, Our messengers [angel of death and his assistants] take his soul, and they never neglect their duty.﴾ *(Qur'an 6: 61)*

Elsewhere, Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿كَلَّآ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ ٱلتَّرَاقِىَ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَقِيلَ مَنْ ۜ رَاقٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَظَنَّ أَنَّهُ ٱلْفِرَاقُ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَٱلْتَفَّتِ ٱلسَّاقُ بِٱلسَّاقِ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ ٱلْمَسَاقُ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾

﴿Nay, when [the soul] reaches to the collarbone [i.e. up to the throat in its exit], And it will be said: 'Who can cure him [and save him from death]?' And he [the dying person] will conclude that it was [the time] of parting [death]; And one leg will be joined with another leg [shrouded].

The drive will be on that Day to your Lord [Allah]!﴾

(Qur'an 75: 26-30)

What reaches to the collarbone is the soul.

The hadith clearly states that the Angel of Death gives the believer glad tidings of forgiveness from Allah and His pleasure, and tells the *kaafir* or evildoer of the anger and wrath of Allah. This is also clearly stated in many texts of the Qur'an. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَـٰمُوا۟ تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا۟ وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟ وَأَبْشِرُوا۟ بِٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَآؤُكُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِىٓ أَنفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ نُزُلًا مِّنْ غَفُورٍ رَّحِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾﴾

﴾Verily, those who say: 'Our Lord is Allah [Alone],' and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend [at the time of their death] [saying]: 'Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised! We have been your friends in the life of this world and are [so] in the Hereafter. Therein you shall have [all] that your inner-selves desire, and therein you shall have [all] for which you ask. An entertainment from [Allah], the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾

(Qur'an 41: 30 32)

This descent (of the angels) - according to a group of leading *mufassireen*, including Mujaahid and As-Suddi - happens at the time of death.[3] Undoubtedly at the point of death, man is in a difficult state in which he fears what lies ahead of him and he fears for those whom he is leaving behind. So the angels come to reassure him concerning

[3] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 6/174

what he is anxious about and to put his mind at rest. They tell him, do not worry about the future in *Al-Barzakh* and in the Hereafter, and do not grieve for those whom you are leaving behind, your family and children, or debts. Rejoice in the greatest glad tidings,

﴿... وَأَبْشِرُوا۟ بِٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ۝٣٠﴾

﴿...But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!﴾ *(Qur'an 41: 30)*

﴿... وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِىٓ أَنفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ ۝٣١﴾

﴿...Therein you shall have [all] that your inner-selves desire, and therein you shall have [all] for which you ask.﴾ *(Qur'an 41: 31)*

So long as a person is devoted to Allah Alone, Allah will always take care of him, especially at times of difficulty, one of the hardest of which is this situation (i.e., dying).

﴿نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَآؤُكُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ... ۝٣١﴾

﴿We have been your friends in the life of this world and are [so] in the Hereafter...﴾ *(Qur'an 41: 31)*

But for the *kaafir* and evildoer, the angels come with the opposite news:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا۟ فِيمَ كُنتُمْ قَالُوا۟ كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ وَٰسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِيهَا ۚ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ۝٩٧﴾

﴿Verily, as for those whom the angels take [in death] while they are wronging themselves [as they stayed among the disbelievers even though emigration was obligatory for them], they [angels] say [to them]: 'In

what [condition] were you?' They reply: 'We were weak and oppressed on the earth.' They [angels] say: 'Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to emigrate therein?' Such men will find their abode in Hell - what an evil destination!﴿ *(Qur'an 4: 97)*

As narrated by Bukhari from Ibn 'Abbaas, this *aayah* was revealed concerning a group of people who had become Muslim, but they did not migrate (*hijrah*), then death caught them, or they were killed in the ranks of the enemy.[4] So the angels rebuked them as they were dying, and gave them tidings of Hellfire.

Allah (ﷻ) tells us how the angels brought about the deaths of the *kuffaar* (disbelievers) in the battle of Badr:

﴿وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۙ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَـٰرَهُمْ وَذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابَ ٱلْحَرِيقِ ﴿٥٠﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّـٰمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٥١﴾﴾

﴾And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve [at death]; they smite their faces and their backs, [saying]: 'Taste the punishment of the blazing Fire. This is because of that which your hands had forwarded. And verily, Allah is not unjust to His slaves'﴿ *(Qur'an 8: 50-51)*

Ibn Katheer said in his *Tafseer* of these *aayaat*: "(This means) if only you could see, O' Muhammad, when the angels take the souls of the *kuffaar*, you would see something tremendously disturbing, when they strike their faces and backs and say, 'Taste the punishment of the blazing Fire.'"[5]

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[4] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 2/369

[5] *Ibid* 3/335

The great *mufassir* 'Allaamah ibn Katheer pointed out that this *aayah* referred to the battle of Badr, but it also applies to every *kaafir*. Hence Allah did not specifically mention the people who died at Badr, rather He said: "And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve..."[6]

What Ibn Katheer said is correct and is indicated by more than one verse in the Qur'an, such as:

﴿فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يَنَالُهُمْ نَصِيبُهُم
مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا يَتَوَفَّوْنَهُمْ قَالُوا أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَدْعُونَ مِن
دُونِ اللَّهِ ۖ قَالُوا ضَلُّوا عَنَّا وَشَهِدُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَافِرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾ ﴾

﴿Who is more unjust than the one who invents a lie against Allah or rejects His *Aayaat* [proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc]? For such their appointed portion [good things of this worldly life and their period of stay therein] will reach them from the Book [of Decrees] until when Our messengers [the angel of death and his assistants] come to them to take their souls, they [the angels] will say: 'Where are those whom you used to invoke and worship besides Allah,' they will reply, 'They have vanished and deserted us.' And they will bear witness against themselves, that they were disbelievers.﴾ *(Qur'an 7: 37)*

﴿الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ فَأَلْقَوُا السَّلَمَ مَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ مِن سُوءٍ ۚ
بَلَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

﴿Those whose lives the angels take while they are doing wrong to themselves [by disbelief and by associating

[6] Opt. cit

partners in worship with Allah and by committing all kinds of crimes and evil deeds]. Then, they will make [false] submission [saying]: 'We used not to do any evil.' [The angels will reply]: 'Yes! Truly, Allah is All-Knower of what you used to do'﴿ *(Qur'an 16: 28)*

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱرْتَدُّوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَدْبَٰرِهِم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلْهُدَى ۙ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ وَأَمْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ كَرِهُوا۟ مَا نَزَّلَ ٱللَّهُ سَنُطِيعُكُمْ فِى بَعْضِ ٱلْأَمْرِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِسْرَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَكَيْفَ إِذَا تَوَفَّتْهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَٰرَهُمْ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

﴾Verily, those who have turned back [have apostatized] as disbelievers after the guidance has been manifested to them - *Shayṭaan* [Satan] has beautified for them [their false hopes], and [Allah] prolonged their term [age]. This is because they said to those who hate what Allah has sent down: 'We will obey you in part of the matter.' But Allah knows their secrets. Then how [will it be] when the angels will take their souls at death, smiting their faces and their backs?﴿ *(Qur'an 47: 25-27)*

2 - The Stupor of Death

Death involves a kind of stupor or intoxication which every person will face when the time of death comes. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَجَآءَتْ سَكْرَةُ ٱلْمَوْتِ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ مَا كُنتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ ﴿١٩﴾﴾

﴾And the stupor of death will come in truth: 'This is what you have been avoiding!'﴿ *(Qur'an 50: 19)*

This stupor or intoxication is the distress and hardship of death. Ar-Raaghib said in his book *Al-Mufradaat*: "This stupor (*sukr*) is the state where a person loses his mind; this word is used mostly in

connection with intoxicant drinks. It is also used to describe such things as anger, love, pain, slumber, and the delirium caused by intense pain. This is what is meant by this *aayah*"[7] The Messenger (ﷺ) also suffered from this stupor. During his final illness there was a pot or jug of water in front of him, and he kept putting his hand in it then wiping his face, and saying, "*Laa ilaaha illallah*, indeed death has stupors."[8] 'Aa'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said, describing the final illness of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ): "I never saw pain more severe than that of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)."[9] 'Aa'ishah (رضي الله عنها) visited her father Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) during his final illness, and when death was approaching, she quoted the words of the poet, "Certainly wealth does not help a man when the death rattle sounds in his throat." He uncovered his face and said, "Do not say that. Rather say: ﴿And the stupor of death will come in truth: "This is what you have been avoiding!"﴾ *(Qur'an 50: 19)*."[10]

Undoubtedly the *kaafir* and the evildoer suffer more in death than does the believer. We have already quoted part of the hadith of Al-Baraa' ibn 'Aazib, in which it says that the soul of the evildoer and the *kaafir* cower in his body when the Angel of Death says to them, "O' evil soul, come out to the anger of Allah and His wrath," and pulls out his soul like a (many-hooked) iron skewer passing through wet wool with which veins and nerves are cut. The Qur'an describes the agony which the *kuffaar* suffer:

﴿وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ قَالَ أُوحِىَ إِلَىَّ وَلَمْ يُوحَ إِلَيْهِ شَىْءٌ وَمَن
قَالَ سَأُنزِلُ مِثْلَ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ ۗ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذِ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ فِى غَمَرَٰتِ ٱلْمَوْتِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ

[7] *Fath al-Baari*, 11/362

[8] This hadith is narrated by Bukhari from 'Aa'ishah in *Kitaab ar-Riqaaq*, *Baab Sakaraat al-Mawt*, *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 11/361

[9] Bukhari, Muslim and Tirmidhi. See *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 11/69

[10] Ibn Abi'd-Dunya. Ibn Katheer said in his *Tafseer* (6/401), after quoting this, this report has many isnads.

بَاسِطُوٓا۟ أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمُ ۖ ٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ ٱلْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ
تَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ غَيْرَ ٱلْحَقِّ وَكُنتُمْ عَنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

﴿And who can be more unjust than he who invents a lie against Allah, or says: 'A revelation has come to me' whereas no Revelation has come to him in anything; and who says, 'I will reveal the like of what Allah has revealed.' And if you could but see when the *Zaalimoon* [polytheists and wrongdoers] are in the agonies of death, while the angels are stretching forth their hands [saying]: 'Deliver your souls! This day you shall be recompensed with the torment of degradation because of what you used to utter against Allah other than the truth. And you used to reject His *Aayaat* [proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.] with disrespect!'"﴾ *(Qur'an 6: 93)*

What is described in this *aayah* happens - as Ibn Katheer says - when the angels of punishment give the *kaafir* the tidings of anger, punishment, chains, fetters, Hell, heat and the wrath of the Most Merciful. So his soul cowers in his body and does not want to come out, then the angels beat them until their souls come out of their bodies, saying,

﴿...أَخْرِجُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمُ ۖ ٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ ٱلْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى
ٱللَّهِ غَيْرَ ٱلْحَقِّ ... ﴿٩٣﴾ ﴾

﴿...Deliver your souls! This day you shall be recompensed with the torment of degradation because of what you used to utter against Allah other than the truth...﴾ *(Qur'an 6: 93)*

Ibn Katheer interpreted the "angels stretching forth their hands" as meaning striking. The meaning of this *aayah* is like the meaning of the *aayah*,

﴿لَئِنۢ بَسَطتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقۡتُلَنِي ...﴾

﴿If you do stretch your hand against me to kill me...﴾

(Qur'an 5: 28)

And,

﴿... وَيَبۡسُطُوٓاْ إِلَيۡكُمۡ أَيۡدِيَهُمۡ وَأَلۡسِنَتَهُم بِٱلسُّوٓءِ ...﴾

﴿...and [they would] stretch forth their hands and their tongues against you with evil...﴾ *(Qur'an 60: 2)*

Some wise people may speak of the hardship and stupor that they are suffering at the time of death. For example, when 'Amr ibn al-'Aaṣ was on his deathbed, his son said to him, "O' my father! You used to say, would that I could meet a wise, intelligent man when he is dying, so that he might describe what he sees. You are that man, so describe it to me." He said, "O' my son, by Allah, it is as if I am lying in a box and breathing through the eye of a needle, and as if there is a thorny piercing branch being pulled from the bottom of my feet through to the top of my head."[11]

Those for whom the agony of death is reduced

The Messenger (ﷺ) told us that the *shaheed* (martyr) who falls in battle will have the agony of death reduced. Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The *shaheed* does not feel the pain of death except as one of you feels the pain of a nip or pinch."

[11] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, p. 19

This has been narrated by Tirmidhi, Nasaa'i and Ad-Daarimi. Tirmidhi said: this is a *ghareeb ḥasan hadith.*[12]

3 - At the Time of Death, a Person Wishes to go Back

When death comes, a person will wish to go back to this world, so that if he was a *kaafir* he might become Muslim, and if he was a sinner he might repent.

﴿حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَ أَحَدَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱرْجِعُونِ ﴿٩٩﴾ لَعَلِّىٓ أَعْمَلُ صَـٰلِحًا فِيمَا
تَرَكْتُ كَلَّآ إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَآئِلُهَا وَمِن وَرَآئِهِم بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾﴾

﴿Until, when death comes to one of them [those who join partners with Allah], he says: 'My Lord! Send me back, So that I may do good in that which I have left behind!' No! It is but a word that he speaks; and behind them is *Barzakh* [a barrier] until the Day when they will be resurrected.﴾ *(Qur'an 23: 99-100)*

Faith will not be accepted once death comes, and repentance will be of no avail once the death rattle sounds in the throat.

﴿إِنَّمَا ٱلتَّوْبَةُ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسُّوٓءَ بِجَهَـٰلَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِن قَرِيبٍ
فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ يَتُوبُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَيْسَتِ ٱلتَّوْبَةُ
لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّى تُبْتُ ٱلْـَٔـٰنَ
وَلَا ٱلَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٨﴾﴾

﴿Allah accepts only the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and foolishness and repent soon afterwards; it is they whom Allah will forgive and Allah is Ever All-

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[12] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 2/358, hadith no. 3836. The editor of *Al-Mishkaat* said, its isnad is *ḥasan*.

> Knower, All-Wise. And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says: 'Now I repent;' nor of those who die while they are disbelievers. For them We have prepared a painful torment.﴿ *(Qur'an 4: 17-18)*

Al-Ḥaafiẓ Ibn Katheer quotes several *aḥaadeeth* which indicate that Allah will accept a person's repentance when death is approaching, so long as the stage of the death rattle has not yet been reached. "Allah will accept the slave's repentance so long as the death rattle has not yet sounded." This is narrated by Tirmidhi and Ibn Maajah.[13] Everyone who repents before he dies has repented soon afterwards, but the condition of repentance is truthful sincerity, and a person may not be able to repent properly when he is going through this agony and terror. So man must hasten to repent before the appointed time comes.

4 - The Believer's Joy at Meeting His Lord

When the angels of the Most Merciful come to the believing slave with glad tidings from Allah, his joy and happiness are apparent. But in the case of the *kaafir* and evildoer, his distress, grief and exhaustion are obvious. Therefore, when the believing slave is dying, he longs to meet Allah, but the disbeliever or evildoer does not want to meet Allah. Anas ibn Maalik narrated from 'Ubaadah ibn aṣ-Ṣaamit that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Whoever loves to meet Allah, Allah loves to meet him, and whoever hates to meet Allah, Allah hates to meet him." 'Aa'ishah or one of his wives said, "We do not like death." He said, "That is not what I meant. But when the believer is dying,

[13] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* 3/224

he is given glad tidings of the pleasure and honouring of Allah, so there is nothing dearer to him than what lies ahead of him. So he loves to meet Allah and Allah loves to meet him. But when the *kaafir* is dying, he is given the tidings of Allah's punishment and torment, so that nothing is more hated by him than what lies ahead of him. So he hates to meet Allah and Allah hates to meet him."[14]

Hence the righteous person asks the people who are carrying him to hasten in bringing him to his grave, because he is longing for the blessings, whilst the sinner cries out bewailing the fate to which he is going. In Bukhari and Sunan an-Nasaa'i it is narrated that Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (ﷺ) related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"When the men carry the deceased on their shoulders, if he was righteous, he says, 'Take me quickly!' But if he was not righteous, he says, 'O' woe! Where are they taking me?' Everything hears his voice except for man, and if man were to hear it, he would fall unconscious."[15]

5 - The Presence of the *Shayṭaan* at the Time of Death

When death comes, the *Shayṭaan* is keen not to let the person escape from him. Muslim narrated from Jaabir ibn 'Abdullah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"The *Shayṭaan* is present with anyone of you in all his affairs. He is present even when he is eating, so if any one of you drops a piece of food, let him clean off any dirt that may be on it and

[14] Bukhari, *Kitaab ar-Riqaaq, Baab man aḥabba liqaa' Allah aḥabba Allah liqaa'ahu.* See *Fatḥ al-Baari,* 11/357

[15] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Qawl al-Mayyit wa huwa 'alal-Janaazah, Qaddimooni. Fatḥ al-Baari,* 3/184. Also narrated by Nasaa'i in *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Bab as-Sur'ah fil-Janaazah,* 4/41

eat it, and not leave it for the *Shayṭaan*. When he has finished eating, let him lick his fingers, for he does not know in which part of the food the *barakah* (blessing) is."

Our scholars mentioned that during those critical moments (of death), the *Shayṭaan* comes to a person in the form of his father or mother, or some other loved one who sincerely care for him, advising him and calling him to follow Judaism or Christianity or some other principles that go against Islam. Then those for whom Allah has decreed doom deviate (from the truth).[16] This is what is meant in the *aayah*:

﴿رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْوَهَّابُ ﴿٨﴾﴾

﴾Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate [from the truth] after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from You. Truly, You are the Bestower.﴿ *(Qur'an 3: 8)*

'Abdullah, the son of Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, said: "My father was dying, and I had in my hand a piece of cloth with which to bind his beard. He was drifting in and out of consciousness, and gesturing with his hand to say 'No, no.' He did this several times, and I said to him, 'O' my father, what was that?' He said, 'The *Shayṭaan* was standing near me, biting his fingertips (i.e., trying hard) and saying, 'Come on, Aḥmad!' and I was saying 'No, no,' - until he died."[17]

Qurṭubi said: "I heard our shaykh, Imam Abul-'Abbaas Aḥmad ibn 'Umar al-Qurṭubi, saying, 'I visited a brother of our shaykh, Abu Ja'far Aḥmad ibn Muhammad al-Qurṭubi in Qurṭubah (Cordova), when he was dying. It was said to him, "Say *Laa ilaaha illallah*," and he was saying, "No, no." When he came to consciousness, we

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[16] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi,* 33

[17] *Ibid,* 34

mentioned that to him. He said, "Two devils came to me on my right and my left. One of them was saying, 'Die as a Jew, for it is the best of religions,' and the other was saying, 'Die as a Christian, for it is the best of religions,' and I was saying to them. 'No, no'"..."[18]

But this does not necessarily happen in every case, as Ibn Taymiyah said. Some people may be tempted to follow other religions before they die, and others may not be tempted in this manner. This happened to some people. All of these are among the trials of life and death which we are commanded to seek refuge from in our prayer.[19] Shaykh Ibn Taymiyah mentioned that the *Shayṭaan* is at his most keen to mislead a person at the time of death, because it is such a critical time. In support of this view he quoted the hadith which is narrated in *Aṣ-Saḥeeḥ*: "It is man's final deed (before death) that counts." And he (ﷺ) said:

> "A person may do the deeds of the people of Paradise until there is no more than a cubit between him and it, then the decree overtakes him and he does an action of the people of Hell and thus enters it (Hell). Or a person may do the deeds of the people of Hell until there is no more than a cubit between him and it, then the decree overtakes him and he does an action of the people of Paradise and thus he enters it (Paradise)." Hence it is narrated that "the *Shayṭaan* tries his hardest to tempt the son of Adam at the time of death, and he says to his helpers, 'Try to catch this one, for if he gets away you will never catch him.'"[20]

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[18] Opt. cit.

[19] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa,* 4/255

[20] *Ibid* 256

6 - Causes of a Bad End

Some of those who appear to be Muslims and act in accordance with Islam come to a bad end - we seek refuge in Allah from that. This bad end may be apparent in the case of some when they are dying. Ṣiddeeq Ḥasan Khan discussed the issue of a bad end, and said: "There are reasons for this of which the believer must remain very cautious."[21] Then he mentioned these reasons, as follows:

(1) Corruption in one's belief (*'aqeedah*)

Even if a person is perfect in his asceticism and conduct, but there is something incorrect in his belief which he is convinced is right and he clings to that belief without thinking that he is mistaken, that false belief may become apparent when he is dying. This incorrect belief may have the effect of destroying the rest of his beliefs at the time of death. If his soul departs before he realizes and is able to come back to true faith, then this will be a bad end for him, and he will depart from this world not as a believer. Thus he will be one of those of whom Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿... وَبَدَا لَهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا۟ يَحْتَسِبُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾﴾

﴾...And there will become apparent to them from Allah what they had not been reckoning.﴿ *(Qur'an 39: 47)*

﴿قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُم بِٱلْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَٰلًا ﴿١٠٣﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٠٤﴾﴾

﴾Say [O' Muhammad]: 'Shall We tell you the greatest losers in respect of [their] deeds? Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds.'﴿ *(Qur'an 18: 103-104)*

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[21] *Yaqẓah Ooli al-I'tibaar,* 211

Everyone who believes in something incorrectly, whether it is the matter of personal opinion or the matter of following other people who believe it in that way, is in great danger, and his asceticism and righteousness will be of no benefit to him. The only thing that will benefit him is correct belief which is in accordance with the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, because the only religious beliefs which count are those which are taken from these two sources.

(2) Persisting in sin

Whoever persists in sin gets used to it, and everything that a man gets used to in his life will come back to him at the time of his death. If he was more inclined towards acts of worship, then what he will remember most at the time of death is those acts of worship. If he was more inclined towards sin, then what he will remember most at the time of death is his sin. It may preoccupy him so much at the time of death that it may prevent him from repenting, so he is chained by it and it forms a barrier between him and his Lord, and it becomes a cause of his being doomed at the end of his life. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Sin is the harbinger of *kufr.*"

The one who does not commit a sin at all, or who commits sin but then repents, is far removed from this danger. But the one who commits many sins, until they outnumber his acts of obedience, and does not repent from them, but rather persists in sin, is in great danger, because his being so used to sin may become the cause of the image of those sins appearing in his mind and his being inclined towards them. So his soul is taken when he is in that state, so that it becomes the cause of his bad end.

This may be understood by means of an analogy. Undoubtedly, what man sees in his dreams are things that he is used to in his life. Hence the one who has spent his life in the pursuit of knowledge sees in his dreams things that have to do with knowledge and scholars. The one

who has spent his life as a tailor sees things that have to do with sewing and tailors. In his dreams, one only sees the things that one is used to because one has dealt with them for a long time. Death is more intense than sleep, but its stupor with its associated unconsciousness is akin to sleep. If a person has been used to committing sin for a long time, this means that he will remember it at the time of death; it will come back to his mind and he will feel an inclination towards it. If his soul is taken at that point, his end will be a bad one.

Ad-Dhahabi said in *Al-Kabaa'ir*: "Mujaahid said: there is no one who dies, but his companions with whom he used to sit appear to him. One of those people who used to play chess was dying, and it was said to him, 'Say *Laa ilaaha illallah.*' He said, 'Checkmate!' then he died. The words that he used to say in his life whilst playing chess came to his tongue, and instead of uttering the word of *Tawḥeed*, he said 'Checkmate!'"

It is narrated that another man used to sit with wine-drinkers. When he was dying, a man came and urged him to say the *shahaadah*. He said to him, 'Drink and pour me some,' then he died. There is no power and no strength except with Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty.[22]

(3) Turning away from righteousness[23]

If a man was righteous in the beginning, then he changed and turned away from that, this will be a cause of his having a bad end, like *Iblees* who at first was the leader and teacher of the angels, and strove the hardest in worship, then when he was commanded to prostrate to Adam he refused and was arrogant, and became one of the disbelievers. And Bal'aam ibn Baa'oor to whom Allah gave His

[22] *Al-Kabaa'ir* by Ad-Dhahabi, p. 91

[23] *Yaqẓah Ooli al-I'tibaar,* p. 212

signs, but he threw them away and preferred this world, and followed his own whims and desires, so he was one of those who went astray. And *Barṣeeṣa* the worshipper, to whom the *Shayṭaan* said, "Disbelieve", and when he disbelieved, the *Shayṭaan* said, "I have nothing to do with you: I fear Allah, the Lord of the Worlds." The *Shayṭaan* led him astray and caused him to disbelieve, but when he disbelieved, he declared that he had nothing to do with him, lest he share in the punishment. But that was of no avail, because Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَكَانَ عَٰقِبَتَهُمَآ أَنَّهُمَا فِى ٱلنَّارِ خَٰلِدَيْنِ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَٰٓؤُا۟ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

﴾So the end of both will be that they will be in the Fire, abiding therein. Such is the recompense of the *Ẓaalimoon* [i.e. polytheists, wrongdoers, disbelievers in Allah and in His Oneness].﴿ *(Qur'an 59: 17)*

(4) Weakness of faith

If there is some weakness in a person's faith, that weakens his love for Allah. The love of this world becomes stronger in his heart and takes over until there is no room left for love of Allah, except for the smallest trace, which has no apparent effect in counteracting the *nafs* or in restraining it from committing sin or urging it to do acts of obedience. So the person indulges his desires and commits sin, and the darkness of sin piles up in his heart and keeps on covering up what light of faith is present, although it is weak. When the stupor of death comes, the love of Allah grows weaker in his heart because he sees that he is departing this world which is so dear to him; his love for this world is so great that he does not want to leave it and it hurts him to depart from it. Allah sees that in him. There is the fear that hatred may displace the love of Allah in his heart, and that weak love may turn to hatred. If his soul departs at this moment of great danger, his end will be a bad one and he will be doomed for eternity.

The reason for this bad end is love of this world, being content with it and rejoicing in it, whilst also being weak in faith which means that one's love for Allah is weak. This is a chronic problem which may affect most people. If a person's heart is overwhelmed with some worldly matter at the point of death, this is what will fill his heart and mind, leaving no room for anything else. If his soul departs at that point, his heart will be filled with that worldly matter and his face will be turned towards it, and that will form a barrier between him and his Lord.

It is narrated that when Sulaymaan ibn 'Abd al-Malik entered Madeenah as a pilgrim, he said, "Is there any man here who met a number of the *Ṣaḥaabah*?" They said, "Yes, Abu Ḥaazim." So he sent for him, and when he came, he said to him: "O Abu Ḥaazim, why do we dislike death?" He said, "All your effort has been for the sake of this world and you have neglected the Hereafter, and you hate to leave that for which you have striven to go to that for which you have made no preparations." He said, "You have spoken the truth." Then he said, "I wonder what is stored for us with Allah?" He said, "Check what you have done in accordance with the Book of Allah (i.e., refer your deeds to the Book of Allah and see how far did you follow the Book) ." He said, "Where will I find it?" He said, "In the *aayah*,

﴿إِنَّ ٱلۡأَبۡرَارَ لَفِى نَعِيمٍ ۝ وَإِنَّ ٱلۡفُجَّارَ لَفِى جَحِيمٍ ۝﴾

> ﴾'Verily, the *Abraar* [the pious believers of Islamic Monotheism] will be in Delight [Paradise]; And verily, the *Fujjaar* [the wicked, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners and evildoers] will be in the blazing Fire [Hell]'﴿ *(Qur'an 82: 13-14)*."

He said, "And where is the mercy of Allah?" He said, "The mercy of Allah is close to those who do good." He said, "I wonder, how will I appear before Allah?" He said, "The one who does good is like the

one who has been absent when he comes back to his family, but the evildoer is like the runaway slave when he comes back to his master." Then Sulaymaan wept loudly, and said, "Advise me!" He said, "Beware lest Allah sees you where He has forbidden you to be and does not find you where He has commanded you to be."

Ṣiddeeq Ḥasan Khan quotes from Al-Ghazaali in *Al-Iḥyaa* that a bad end may be on one of two levels, one of which is more serious than the other. The more serious level, which dooms a person to Hell, is when the heart is overwhelmed with either doubt or denial at the time of the stupor and terror of death, and the soul is taken when it is in that state. This forms an eternal barrier between the person and Allah, and condemns him to eternal banishment and everlasting torment.

The second level is when a person's heart, at the moment of death, is overwhelmed with love for some worldly matter or desire, which appears in his heart and overwhelms it, leaving no room for anything else at that moment. If the soul is taken at the moment when it is overwhelmed with love for this world, the matter is serious, because a person dies as he lived. At that point the feeling of sorrow and regret will be great indeed, unless faith and love for Allah were firmly implanted in his heart for a long time and were supported by righteous deeds which will cancel out this danger that was posed to the heart at the time of death. If his faith was equivalent to an atom's weight (or a small ant), he will be brought forth from Hell sooner. If it was smaller than that, he will remain in Hell for a longer time, but so long as there was even the tiniest speck of faith, he will eventually be brought forth from the Fire, even if it is after thousands of years. Everyone who believes in Allah and in His Attributes and deeds, but he has the slightest misconception, whether that is because of imitating others or because of his own personal opinion, is exposed to this danger.

Asceticism and piety are not enough to ward off this danger; nothing can save a person from this except belief in the truth according to the Qur'an and Sunnah.[24]

7 - The Prophets Were Given the Choice at the Time of Death

When the time of death came for the Prophets, Allah showed them the great reward that was stored for them with Him, then He gave them the choice of staying in this world or moving to that great position. Undoubtedly every Messenger preferred the eternal blessing. This happened to our Messenger (ﷺ) too - he was given the choice and he made his choice. Bukhari it is narrated that 'Aa'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to say, and it is true:

> 'No Prophet ever died until he had been shown his place in Paradise, then given the choice.' When it was revealed to him, and his head was on my thigh, he fell unconscious for a while, then he woke up. He stared at the ceiling, then he said, 'O' Allah, with the highest companions.' I said, 'He is not choosing us,' and I knew that this was what he had told us about." She said: "Those were the last words that the Prophet (ﷺ) spoke, when he said, 'O' Allah, with the highest companions.'"[25]

According to another report[26]: "During his final illness, I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying in a hoarse voice:

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[24] *Yaqzah Ooli al-I'tibaar,* p. 216

[25] Bukhari: *Kitaab ar-Riqaaq, Baab Man ahabba liqaa' Allah, Fath al-Baari,* 11/ 357, also narrated by Muslim in his *Saheeh,* and by Maalik in *Al-Muwatta',* and by Tirmidhi in *as-Sunan.* Ibn al-Atheer mentioned other versions of the hadith narrated from 'Aa'ishah in *Jaami' al-Usool,* 11/67

[26] This is in all the reports

﴿... مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ وَٱلصِّدِّيقِينَ وَٱلشُّهَدَآءِ وَٱلصَّـٰلِحِينَ ۚ وَحَسُنَ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ رَفِيقًا ۝٦٩﴾

﴿...then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the *Ṣiddiqoon* [those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them, like Abu Bakr Aṣ-Ṣiddeeq], the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are!'﴾ *(Qur'an 4: 69)*."

She said: "And I thought that he had made his choice that day."

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOUL'S DEPARTURE AND JOURNEY TO HEAVEN

It is narrated by Muslim that Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) said: "When the soul of the believer departs it is met by two angels who take it up." Ḥammaad[1] said: "And he mentioned its good fragrance of musk." He said: "And the inhabitants of heaven say, 'A good soul that has come from the earth; may Allah bless you and the body in which you used to dwell.' Then he is taken up to his Lord, then He says, 'Take it to its destined end.'"

He further said: "But when the soul of the *kaafir* departs..." Ḥammaad said: "And he mentioned its stench, and curses..." "... the inhabitants of heaven say, 'An evil soul that has come from the earth....' And it is said, 'Take it to its destined end.'"[2]

According to the hadith of Al-Baraa', the Messenger (ﷺ) mentioned the way in which the soul of the righteous person will be honoured after it is brought forth from his body: the angels send blessings upon that good soul, the gates of heaven are opened for it, it is placed in a shroud from Paradise with embalming perfumes from Paradise and it emits a beautiful fragrance which is superior to the scent of musk. Then the angels take it on a sublime journey of honour, and the gates of heaven are opened for it. As for the evil soul, the angels of heaven curse it when it is brought forth. The gates of heaven are locked, and every group of angels of the Most Merciful who are at the gates plead for it not to be allowed to

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[1] One of the narrators of this hadith from Abu Hurayrah, as recorded by Muslim.

[2] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Jannah*, Baab *'Arad Maq'ad al-Mayit*, 4/2202, hadith no. 2872

ascend through the place where they are. That evil soul is placed in a shroud from Hell with embalming perfumes from Hell. There emanate from it foul stenches which offend the angels of the Most Merciful. It is taken up to heaven but the gates of heaven are not opened for it. Then his soul is thrown down from that height.

According to the hadith of Al-Baraa' ibn 'Aazib, in which the Messenger (ﷺ) described a person's journey after death to *Al-Barzakh*, he said: "...until when his soul comes forth, every angel between heaven and earth, and every angel in heaven, sends blessings on it. The gates of heaven are opened for him and there is no one among the gatekeepers who does not pray to Allah to let him ascend through where they are. When he (i.e., the Angel of Death) takes it (that soul), they (the angels) do not leave it in his hand even for a twinkle of an eye, before they take it and put it in that shroud and that embalming perfume." This is what Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿... تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ۝﴾

﴾...Our messengers [angel of death and his assistants] take his soul, and they never neglect their duty.﴿

(Qur'an 6: 61)

There comes forth from it (a fragrance) like the finest musk to be found on the face of the earth. They take it up, and they do not pass any group of angels but they say, 'Who is this good soul?' They say, 'It is So and so the son of So and so' - calling him by the best names by which he was known in this world. Then when they reach the first heaven, they ask for it to be opened for them, and it is opened for them. (In each of the heavens), the angels who are closest to Allah walk with him (to bid him farewell) as he moves to the next heaven, until he reaches the seventh heaven. Then Allah (ﷻ) says, 'Place the book of My slave in *'Illiyyeen* (the Register of righteous deeds).'

﴿وَمَآ أَدۡرَىٰكَ مَا عِلِّيُّونَ ١٩ كِتَٰبٞ مَّرۡقُومٞ ٢٠ يَشۡهَدُهُ ٱلۡمُقَرَّبُونَ ٢١﴾

﴿'And what will make you know what *'Illiyyoon* is? A Register inscribed, To which bear witness those nearest [to Allah, i.e. the angels].﴾ *(Qur'an 83: 19-21)*

So they place his book in *'Illiyyeen*, then it is said, 'Take him back to the earth, for from it I created them, to it I will return them, and from it I shall bring them forth again."

And the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) spoke of the evil soul which is dragged forth from the *kaafir* or evildoer. He said that after it is dragged forth, "(Then every angel between heaven and earth, and every angel in heaven, curses it, and the gates of heaven are shut. There is no one among the gatekeepers who does not pray to Allah not to let him ascend through where they are). When he (i.e., the Angel of Death) takes it (that soul), they (the angels) do not leave it in his hand even for the twinkle of an eye, before they take it and put it in that sackcloth. There emanates from it (a stench) like the foulest stench of dead flesh to be found on the face of the earth. They take it up, and they do not pass any group of angels but they say, 'Who is this evil soul?' They say, 'It is So and so the son of So and so' - calling him by the worst names by which he was known in this world. Then when they reach the first heaven, they ask for it to be opened for them, and it is not opened for them." Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) recited the *aayah*:

﴿... لَا تُفَتَّحُ لَهُمۡ أَبۡوَٰبُ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَلَا يَدۡخُلُونَ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ حَتَّىٰ يَلِجَ ٱلۡجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ ٱلۡخِيَاطِۚ
... ٤٠﴾

﴿...for them the gates of heaven will not be opened, and they will not enter Paradise until the camel goes through the eye of the needle...﴾ *(Qur'an 7: 40)*

"Then Allah (ﷻ) says:

'Record his book in *Sijjeen* (the Register of evil deeds), in the lowest earth. Then He says, 'Return My slave to the earth, for I have promised them that from it I created them, to it I will return them, and from it I shall bring them forth again.' So they throw it down from heaven, (until it returns to his body)." Then he recited the *aayah*:

﴿... وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَتَخْطَفُهُ ٱلطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِى بِهِ ٱلرِّيحُ فِى مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ ﴿٣١﴾﴾

﴾...and whoever assigns partners to Allah, it is as if he had fallen from the sky, and the birds had snatched him, or the wind had thrown him to a far off place.﴿

(Qur'an 22: 31)

Then his soul is returned to his body.[3]

Ibn Maajah narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) said:

> "The deceased is attended by the angels. If he was a righteous man, they say, 'Come forth, O' good soul which was in a good body. Come forth praiseworthy, and receive the glad tidings of rest and provision, and a Lord Who is not angry.' They continue to say this until it comes out, then they take it up to heaven. They ask for it to be opened, and it is asked, 'Who is this?' They say, 'So and so.' Then it is said, 'Welcome to the good soul which was in a good body. Enter praiseworthy and receive the glad tidings of rest and provision, and a Lord Who is not angry. They continue to say this until they take him up to

[3] A *saheeh hadith.*

the heaven in which is Allah[4], may He be blessed and exalted. But if it was an evil man, they say, 'Come forth, O' evil soul which was in an evil body. Come forth blameworthy and receive the tidings of a boiling fluid and dirty wound discharges, and other torments of similar kind, all together! (cf. 38:57-58)' They continue to say this until it comes forth, then they take it up to heaven. They ask for the heaven to be opened for it, and it is asked, 'Who is this?' They say, 'So and so.' It is said, 'There is no welcome for the evil soul which was in an evil body. Go back blameworthy.' So the gates are not opened for it, and it is sent down from heaven and goes back to the grave..."'[5]

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[4] This does not mean that the heaven physically contains Allah - exalted be He far above that. Rather Allah is above His heavens, distinct from His creation. Allah says concerning His *Kursiy* (Footstool): ﴾...His *Kursiy* extends over the heavens and the earth...﴿ *(Qur'an 2:255)*. The Messenger told us that the heavens, in comparison to the *Kursiy*, are like an iron ring thrown out into open country, and that the *Kursiy*, in comparison to the Throne, is like an iron ring thrown out into open country. This *aayah* is like the verses, ﴾...and I will surely, crucify you on [lit. in] the trunks of date palms...﴿ *(Qur'an 20:71)* and ﴾...So travel freely for four months [as you will] throughout [lit. in] the land...﴿ *(Qur'an 9:2)*, where meaning is not that they are inside the trees or inside the earth. So the meaning is that Allah is above and over the heavens. This hadith is like the *aayah*, ﴾Do you feel secure that He, Who is over the heaven (Allah), will not cause the earth to sink with you?...﴿ *(Qur'an 67:16)*, i.e., He is above. And it is like the hadith in which the Messenger asked the slave girl, "Where is Allah?" She said, "In heaven." He (bpuh) said, "Set her free, for she is a believer." This hadith is narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*.

[5] Ibn Maajah. Shaykh Naaṣir classed it as *ṣaḥeeḥ* in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 2/169

CHAPTER FOUR
THE GRAVE

1 - The Terrors of the Grave

Haani', the freed slave of 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan, narrated that whenever 'Uthmaan (may Allah be pleased with him) stood over a grave he would weep until his beard would be wet. It was said to him, "You remember Paradise and Hell and you do not weep, but when you remember the grave you weep?" He said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say

> 'The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter. Whoever passes through it safely, whatever comes after that will be easier for him, but if he does not pass through it safely, whatever comes after that will be harder for him.'"

He said, "And I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

> 'I have never seen any (disturbing) scene, more terrifying than the grave.'"

This is narrated by Tirmidhi.[1] Because what comes after the grave will be easier for the one who passes through it safely, when the believer is shown in his grave the delights that Allah has prepared for him, he will say, "O' Lord, hasten the coming of the Hour, so that I may go back to my family and my wealth."[2] But when the

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[1] Tirmidhi and Ibn Maajah. Tirmidhi said, this is a *ghareeb hadith*. See *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 1/48; *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 11/164. Shaykh Naaṣir said in his commentary on *Al-Mishkaat*, its isnad is *ḥasan*. See *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 2/85

[2] From the hadith of Al-Baraa'.

disbeliever or evildoer sees the intense torment that Allah has prepared for him, he will say, despite the torment that he is suffering, "O' Lord, do not let the Hour come"[3] - because what is yet to come is even worse and more terrifying.

The darkness of the grave

At the time of the Messenger (ﷺ), a woman died who used to clean the mosque. The Messenger (ﷺ) noticed that she was not there. They told him that she died during the night and buried her. They did not like to wake him up. He asked his Companions to show him her grave, then he went to her grave and prayed for her. Then he said,

> "These graves are full of darkness, but Allah illuminates them for their occupants by virtue of my praying for them." This is narrated by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood, Ibn Maajah, Al-Bayhaqi and Aḥmad.[4]

2 - The Squeezing of the Grave

When the deceased is placed in his grave, he is squeezed in a manner from which no one, great or small, righteous or immoral, can escape. It is narrated in the *aḥaadeeth* that Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh was squeezed, and he was the one at whose death the Throne shook and for whom the gates of heaven were opened, and whose funeral was attended by seventy thousand angels. In *Sunan an-Nasaa'i* it is narrated that Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) related: "The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) said:

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[3] From the hadith of Al-Baraa'.

[4] *Aḥkaam al-Janaa'iz*, p. 87

> 'This one at whose death the Throne shook, for whom the gates of heaven were opened, and whose funeral was attended by seventy thousand angels, has been squeezed once, then relieved him.'"[5]

In *Musnad al-Imam Aḥmad* it is also reported from Ibn 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "There is squeezing in the grave; if anyone were to have been saved from it, it would have been Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh."[6]

In *Musnad aṭ-Ṭabaraani al-Kabeer* and *Musnad aṭ-Ṭabaraani al-Awsaṭ* it is narrated from Ibn 'Abbaas (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "If anyone were to have been saved from the squeezing of the grave, it would have been Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh. He was squeezed once, then released."[7]

All these texts indicate that the squeezing of the grave is inevitable for every person, even children are not spared of this. In *Musnad aṭ-Ṭabaraani al-Kabeer* it is narrated from Abu Ayyoob al-Anṣaari with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad, and in *Musnad aṭ-Ṭabaraani al-Awsaṭ* and *Al-Kaamil* from Ibn 'Adiy from Anas, that the Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) said:

> "If anyone were to have been saved from the squeezing of the grave, it would have been this child."[8]

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[5] Nasaa'i: *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz*, Baab *Ḍummat al-Qabr wa Ḍaghṭatuhu*, 4/100. Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani said in *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ* (1/49): its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of Muslim.

[6] Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani said in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'* (2/236), its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*

[7] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'* (5/71), its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*

[8] *Ibid*

3 - The Trial (*Fitnah*) of the Grave

(1) How will this trial be?

When a person is placed in his grave, two angels come to him in a frightening form. In *Sunan at-Tirmidhi* it says: "When the deceased - or when one of you - is buried, two black and blue angels come to him, one of whom is called *Al-Munkar* and the other *An-Nakeer*. They say, 'What did you say about this man?' and he tells them what he used to say, 'He is the slave of Allah and His Messenger. I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger...' But if he was a hypocrite, he says, 'I heard the people saying something and I said likewise; I don't know...'"[9]

According to the hadith narrated by Al-Baraa' ibn 'Aazib, the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

> "Two (very harsh) angels come to him (and treat him roughly) and make him sit up. They say to him, 'Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your Prophet?' This is the last trial to which the believer is subjected. This is what Allah refers to in the *aayah*:
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> ﴿يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱلْقَوْلِ ٱلثَّابِتِ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ... ﴿٢٧﴾﴾
>
> ﴿Allah will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world...﴾ *(Qur'an 14: 27)*

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[9] Tirmidhi, *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz*, Baab *Maa jaa'a fi 'adhaab al-qabr*, 3/383. Tirmidhi said, (it is) a *ghareeb hasan* hadith. The editor, Shaykh Aḥmad Shaakir, said: It is not narrated by any of the authors of the six books, apart from Tirmidhi. Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani indicated that it is *ḥasan* in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 1/259, and he narrated it in *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, hadith no. 1391

So he says, 'My Lord is Allah, my religion is Islam and my Prophet is Muhammad (ﷺ).' Then a voice cries out from heaven, 'My slave has spoken the truth.'"

And he said concerning the *kaafir* or evildoer: "Two (very harsh) angels come to him (and treat him roughly) and make him sit. They say to him, 'Who is your Lord?' He says, 'Oh, oh, I don't know.' They say to him, 'What is your religion?' He says, 'Oh, oh, I don't know.' They say, 'What do you say about this man who was sent among you?' He cannot remember his name, so they tell him, 'Muhammad.' He says, 'Oh, oh, I don't know. (I heard people saying such and such.' They say to him, 'May you never know and may you never say what the people said!') Then a voice calls out, 'My slave is lying.'[10]

It is narrated from Anas (ﷺ) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "When a person is placed in his grave, and his companions leave him, he can hear their footsteps. When they have left, two angels come to him, get him sit and say, 'What did you say about this man, Muhammad?' The believer says, 'I bear witness that he is the slave of Allah and His Messenger...' But the *kaafir* or hypocrite (in one report: the *kaafir* and the hypocrite) says, 'I don't know. I used to say what the people were saying about him.' It is said to him, 'May you never know and may you never say what the people said!'" This is narrated by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood and Nasaa'i.[11]

At first, the Messenger (ﷺ) did not know that this ummah would be tried in the grave. Then Allah revealed this knowledge to him. 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr narrated that his maternal aunt 'Aa'ishah said: "The Messenger (ﷺ) came to me, and there was a Jewish woman

[10] A *saheeh hadith*.

[11] *Jaami' al-Usool*, 11/173

with me. She was saying, 'Do you think that you will be tested in the grave?' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was alarmed, and said, 'The Jews will be tested.'" 'Aa'ishah said, "Several nights passed, then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said

> 'Do you know that it has been revealed to me that you will be tested in the grave?'

'Aa'ishah said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) after that seeking refuge with Allah from the torment of the grave."'[12]

(2) Will the *kaafir* be tested in his grave?

The *ahaadeeth* that we have quoted indicate that the *kuffaar* will be tested in their graves. But Al-Ḥakeem at-Tirmidhi, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr and Suyooṭi[13] held a different view. Al-Ḥakeem at-Tirmidhi quoted as evidence, that they will not be questioned, the fact that when previous nations refused to respond to their Messengers, the punishment was hastened upon them, unlike this ummah from whom the punishment is withheld. The Messenger (ﷺ) has been sent with the sword, so whoever enters Islam for fear of being killed, then becomes a hypocrite, will be punished in his grave. But what he says is subject to further discussion, because Allah did not destroy the disbelievers of other nations after He had sent down the *Tawraat*.[14] Ibn 'Abd al-Barr quoted as evidence the *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith in which the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "This ummah will be tested in their graves"; some versions say, "will be questioned."[15] The *ṣaḥeeḥ aḥaadeeth* refute

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[12] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Masaajid wa Mawaadi' aṣ-Ṣalaah, Baab Istiḥbaab al-Ta'awwudh min 'Adhaab al-Qabr*, hadith nos. 584, 1/410

[13] *Lawaami' al-Anwaar al-Bahiyyah*, 2/10

[14] See *Lawaami' al Anwaar al-Bahiyyah* by As-Safaareeni, 2/10

[15] *Lawaami' al-Anwaar al-Bahiyyah* by As-Safaareeni, 2/10; *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, 147

this understanding, and indicate that this is not limited to the believers or to this ummah.

'Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Ishbeeli, Ibn al-Qayyim, Qurṭubi, As-Safaareeni and others were of the view that the questioning (in the grave) includes all people.[16]

(3) Will anybody other than those who are accountable be tested?

The trial of the grave is something which will happen to all of those who are accountable, apart from the Prophets[17] - there is some scholarly dispute as to whether they are subject to it - and the *shuhadaa'* (martyrs), *muraabiṭoon* (those who guard the borders of Islam) and others who, it is stated in the texts, will be spared this trial, as we shall see in more detail below.

There is also some dispute concerning young children and the insane. Some of the scholars, including Al-Qaaḍi Abu Ya'laa and Ibn 'Aqeel, said that they will not be tested, on the grounds that the test is for those who are accountable; those from whom the pen has been lifted (i.e., their deeds are not being recorded because they are not accountable) are not included in this test, because there is no point in questioning them about something for which they are not accountable.

Others said that they will be tested. This is the view of Abul-Ḥakeem al-Ḥamadaani and Abul-Ḥasan ibn 'Abdoos, who narrated it from the companions of Ash-Shaafa'i. Maalik and others narrated from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) offered the funeral prayer for a child, then he said,

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[16] *Lawaami' al-Anwaar al-Bahiyyah* by As-Safaareeni, 2/10; *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, 147

[17] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 4/257

"O' Allah, protect him from the torment of the grave and the trial of the grave."

This view is in accordance with the views of those who say that they will be tested in the Hereafter and that they will be accountable on the Day of Resurrection. This is the view of most of the scholars and of *Ahl as-Sunnah* among the scholars of hadith and *kalaam*. This is what is mentioned by Abul-Ḥasan al-Asha'ri from *Ahl as-Sunnah*, and he favoured this view; this is also what is implied by the statements of Imam Aḥmad.[18]

4 - The Torment and Blessing of the Grave

(1) The *aḥaadeeth* about the torment and blessing of the grave are *mutawaatir*

The commentator on *Aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah* said: "The reports from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) which confirm the torment and blessing of the grave, as a person deserves, and the questioning by the two angels, reach the level of *mutawaatir*.[19] So it is obligatory to accept these facts and believe in them, but we do not discuss how these things occur, because the (human) mind is not able to comprehend how they happen, for it is something which is not known in this world. Islam does not teach anything that contradicts common sense, although it may tell of things that are beyond the human imagination. When the soul returns to the body (in the grave), this does not happen in the same manner in which it happens in this world; it happens in a way that is different from what is known in this world."[20]

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[18] See *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, 4/257, 277

[19] Report from a number of chain of narrators.

[20] *Sharḥ al-'Aqeedah at-Ṭaḥaawiyyah*, P 450

Elsewhere he said: "Know that the torment of the grave is the torment of *Al-Barzakh*. Everyone who dies and deserves punishment will receive his share of it, whether he is buried in a grave or not, whether he is eaten by wild animals or burned until he becomes ashes which are blown away by the wind, whether he is crucified, or drowned at sea. His soul and his body will experience the same torment as those who are buried in graves, and he will be made to sit up (to be questioned) and his ribs will interlock (when he is squeezed by the earth), and so on, as was narrated. It is essential to understand what the Messenger (ﷺ) meant, without adding or taking away anything."[21]

The heretics and those Muslim scholars who adopted the philosophers' way of thinking denied the torment of the grave, and said that it is not real. They cited as evidence the fact that graves had been opened and none of the things described in the reports had been seen.[22]

It was also denied by the *Khawaarij* and by some of the *Mu'tazilah*, such as Diraar ibn 'Amr and Bishr al-Mareesi. They were opposed by all of the *Ahl as-Sunnah*, and by most of the *Mu'tazilah*.[23]

They disbelieved in something without examining the matter thoroughly. They thought that their eyes could see everything and that their ears could hear everything. Nowadays we understand mysteries of the universe which our ears and eyes are unable to hear and see. Whoever believes in Allah believes in what He tells us.

There are verses in the Qur'an which point towards the torment of the grave. Bukhari discussed the torment of the grave in *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz*, in which he includes a chapter entitled *Baab ma jaa'a fi 'Adhaab al-Qabr*, in which he quotes the *aayaat*:

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[21] *Sharh al-'Aqeedah at-Tahaawiyyah*, P 451

[22] *Tadhkirat al-Qurtubi*, 125

[23] *Fath al-Baari*, 3/233

﴿... إِذِ ٱلظَّـٰلِمُونَ فِى غَمَرَٰتِ ٱلْمَوْتِ وَٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ بَاسِطُوٓا۟ أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوٓا۟
أَنفُسَكُمُ ۖ ٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ ٱلْهُونِ ... ﴿٩٣﴾ ﴾

﴾...And if you could but see when the *Zaalimoon* [polytheists and wrongdoers] are in the agonies of death, while the angels are stretching forth their hands [saying]: 'Deliver your souls! This day you shall be recompensed with the torment of degradation'...﴿ *(Qur'an 6: 93)*

﴿... سَنُعَذِّبُهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾ ﴾

﴾...We shall punish them twice, and thereafter they shall be brought back to a great [horrible] torment.﴿

(Qur'an 9: 101)

﴿... وَحَاقَ بِـَٔالِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوٓءُ ٱلْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٥﴾ ٱلنَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا
وَعَشِيًّا ۖ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوٓا۟ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ ٱلْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾

﴾...While an evil torment encompassed Fir'awn's [Pharaoh] people. The Fire, they are exposed to it, morning and afternoon. And on the Day when the Hour will be established [it will be said to the angels]: 'Cause Fir'awn's [Pharaoh] people to enter the severest torment!'﴿" *(Qur'an 40: 45-46)*

The first *aayah* which Bukhari quoted is speaking of how the angels punish the *kuffaar* at the moment of death, as we have discussed above. The second *aayah* indicates that there are two torments which will befall the *munaafiqeen* before the torment of the Day of Resurrection; the first is that which Allah sends upon them in this world, either as a punishment from Him or at the hands of the believers, and the second punishment is the torment of the grave. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri said: "(This means) We shall punish them twice, the

punishment in this world and the torment of the grave."[24] Aṭ-Ṭabari said: "It is most likely that one of these two times is the torment of the grave, and the other may be any of the things that we have mentioned previously, such as hunger, being taken prisoner, being killed, being humiliated, etc."[25]

The third *aayah* offers clear evidence in support of *Ahl as-Sunnah* who believe in the torment of the grave, for Allah states clearly that the people of Pharaoh are exposed to the Fire morning and afternoon, and this happens before the Day of Resurrection, because Allah then says, ﴾...And on the Day when the Hour will be established [it will be said to the angels]: Cause Fir'awn's [Pharaoh] people to enter the severest torment!'﴿ *(Qur'an 40: 46)*

Al-Qurṭubi said: "The majority believe that this exposure (to the Fire) takes place in *Al-Barzakh*. This is the evidence which confirms the torment of the grave."[26]

Further Qur'anic evidence which clearly points to the torment of the grave is to be found in the *aayah*,

﴿يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱلْقَوْلِ ٱلثَّابِتِ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ... ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

﴾Allah will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world and in the Hereafter...﴿

(Qur'an 14: 27)

According to the hadith narrated by Al-Baraa' ibn 'Aazib, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

[24] *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 3/233

[25] *Ibid*

[26] *Ibid*, 11/233

"When the believer is made to sit in his grave, he testifies that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, that is (what is meant by) the *aayah*, ﴾'...Allah will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm.'﴿ *(Qur'an 14: 27)*."

Another report adds: "(The *aayah*),

﴿يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ... ۝﴾

﴾'Allah will keep firm those who believe'...﴿

(Qur'an 14: 27)

was revealed concerning the torment of the grave."[27]

'Aa'ishah (ﵺ) narrated that a Jewish woman came to her and mentioned the torment of the grave, and said to her, "May Allah grant you refuge from the torment of the grave.' 'Aa'ishah asked the Messenger (ﷺ) about the torment of the grave, and he said, "Yes, the torment of the grave." 'Aa'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said, "After that I never saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) pray, but he sought refuge with Allah from the torment of the grave." Ghandar added, "The torment of the grave is real." This is narrated by Bukhari.[28]

In Muslim it is narrated that 'Aa'ishah (ﵺ) said, "Two of the old Jewish women of Madeenah came to me and said, 'The occupants of the graves are being tormented in their graves.' I did not believe them, and I did not want to believe them. Then they left, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) came in. I said to him, 'O Messenger of Allah, two of the old Jewish women of Madeenah came to me, and they claimed that the occupants of the graves are being tormented in

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[27] Bukhari; *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Baab ma jaa'a fi 'Adhaab al-Qabr, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 3/231

[28] *Ibid*

their graves.' He said,

> 'They spoke the truth, for they are tormented with a torment which the animals can hear.

She said: "After that I never saw him pray, but he sought refuge with Allah from the torment of the grave."[29]

Because of the seriousness of the matter, the Messenger (ﷺ) used to teach his companions about it, and he also delivered a sermon on it. In Bukhari it is narrated that Asmaa' bint Abi Bakr (رضي الله عنها) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stood up to deliver a *khuṭbah*. He mentioned the trial of the grave with which each person will be tested. When he mentioned that, a nervous hubbub arose among the Muslims." This is narrated by Bukhari[30] and Nasaa'i. Nasaa'i added: "I was unable to understand what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was saying. When the hubbub died down, I asked a man who was near me, 'May Allah bless you, what did the Messenger (ﷺ) say at the end?' He said: '[The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)] said:

> "It has been revealed to me that you will be tested in your graves (with a trial) that is similar to the trial of the *Dajjaal*."'"[31]

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) heard the voices of those who were being tormented

Allah gave His Messenger the ability to hear those who were being tormented in their graves. According to the hadith narrated by Muslim from Zayd ibn Thaabit (رضي الله عنه), he said: "Whilst the Prophet

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[29] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Masaajid, Baab Istiḥbaab at-Ta'awwudh min 'Adhaab al-Qabr*, 1/411

[30] Bukhari, *Kitaab al Janaa'iz, Baab maa jaa'a fi 'Adhaab al-Qabr, Fatḥ al Baari*, 3/232

[31] Nasaa'i, see *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 11/170

(ﷺ) was in the garden of Banu-Najjaar, on his mule, and we were with him, his mule took a different route and nearly threw him. There were graves there, six or five or four. He said, 'Who knows whose graves these are?' A man said, 'I do.' He said, 'When did these people die?' He said, 'They died at the time of *shirk*.' He said, 'This ummah will be tested in their graves. Were it not that you might become afraid to bury one another, I would pray to Allah to make you hear what I can hear of the torment of the grave.'"[32]

Bukhari, Muslim and *Sunan an-Nasaa'i*, narrated that Abu Ayyoob al-Anṣaari (ﷺ) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) went out after the sun had set, and heard a sound. He said, 'Jews are being tormented in their graves.'"[33]

Further evidence that the Messenger (ﷺ) heard those who were tormented in their graves is to be found in the hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim from Ibn 'Abbaas, in which it says that the Messenger (ﷺ) passed by two graves and said,

> "They are being punished, but they are not being punished for any major sin..." This hadith will be quoted in full below, *In sha Allah*.

People other than the Messenger (ﷺ) heard the voices of those who were being tormented

Some people still speak of having heard or seen those who are being tormented in their graves; among them are trustworthy people who are known to be sound in their religious commitment and honesty. Ibn Taymiyah says concerning this: "This has happened to many people of our own times both whilst awake and in their dreams.

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[32] Muslim in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ, Kitaab al-Jannah, Baab 'Arḍ Maq'ad al-Mayit min al-Jannah aw an-Naar 'alayhi*, 4/2199

[33] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 11/172

They know that and believe it. We know of many stories of that nature."[34]

Elsewhere, in the context of refuting those who deny the torment of the grave, he says: "It is known that when a person is asleep, his soul may sit, stand and walk; it goes and speaks and does things whilst it is still connected to his body, so his body and soul may feel delight or torment, even though his body is lying down, his eyes are shut, his mouth is closed and his limbs are still, but they may move because of the strength of the dream, and he may stand up, walk, speak or scream because of the intensity of what is happening inside him. This is similar to what happens to the deceased in his grave, for his soul sits up, is questioned, is blessed or punished, and screams. This is connected to his body, although it is lying in its grave. It may be so intense that it affects his body and he might be seen coming out of his grave with the marks of punishment on him. The angels of torment are appointed over him, so his body moves and walks and emerges from its grave. More than one person has heard the voices of those who are being tormented in their graves, and some of those who have emerged from their graves whilst being tormented have been seen, as have some of those who sit up when the torment becomes intense. But this does not necessarily happen in the case of every person who is tormented, just as not every sleeping person necessarily sits up because of the things he is seeing (in his dreams). It depends on how intense the matter is."[35]

(2) Description of the blessings and torment of the grave

According to the hadith of Al-Baraa' ibn 'Aazib, the Messenger (ﷺ) said that the angels question the believer in his grave and when he

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[34] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 24/376

[35] *Ibid*

answers well, "a voice cries out from heaven, 'My slave has spoken the truth; supply him with furnishings from Paradise and clothe him from Paradise, and open for him a gate to Paradise.' So there comes to him some of its fragrant scent, and his grave is expanded for him as far as the eye can see. There comes to him (according to one report, there appears to him) a man with a handsome face, fine clothes and a pleasant scent. He says, 'Receive the glad tidings of that which will delight you. (Receive the glad tidings of the pleasure of Allah, and Gardens in which is everlasting joy). This is your day which you were promised.' (The deceased) says, '(May Allah bless you), who are you? Your face is a face which portends good.' He says, 'I am your righteous deeds. (By Allah, all I ever knew of you was that you were quick to obey Allah and slow to disobey Him; may Allah reward you with good).' Then a door to Paradise is opened for him, and a door to Hell, and it is said, 'This would have been your place had you disobeyed Allah, but Allah has replaced it with this for you.' And when he sees what is in Paradise, he says, 'O Lord, hasten on the Hour, so that I may return to my family and my wealth.' (And it is said to him, 'Be calm and feel at ease.')"

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said that after the *kaafir* or evildoer has given a bad reply (to the angels' questions), "a voice cries out from heaven, saying 'He has lied. Supply him with furnishings from Hell, and open a door to Hell for him.' So there comes to him some of its heat and hot wind. His grave compresses him until his ribs interlock. Then there comes to him (according to one report, there appears to him) a man with an ugly face, horrible clothes and a foul stench. He says, 'Receive the tidings of that which will distress you. This is your day which you were promised.' (The deceased) says, '(May Allah curse you), who are you? Your face portends evil.' He says, 'I am your evil deeds. (By Allah, all I ever knew of you was that you were slow to obey Allah and quick to disobey Him;) (may Allah requite you with

evil.)' Then Allah appoints over him one who is blind, deaf and dumb, in whose hand is an iron rod which, if he were to strike a mountain with it, it would turn to dust. He strikes him with it until he turns to dust, then he is restored to his former state, and he is struck again. He utters a scream which everything can hear except for mankind and the jinn. Then a door to Hell is opened for him, and his grave is furnished from Hell.) And he says, 'O' Lord, do not let the Hour come.'"[36]

According to the hadith of Anas, when the believing slave answers the questions in his grave truthfully, "It is said to him, 'Look at your place in Hell, which Allah has replaced with a place in Paradise.'" The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "He is shown them both." Qataadah said: "He mentioned that his grave would be expanded for him." In the hadith of Anas it says that after the *kaafir* or hypocrite answers those questions in the grave wrongly, it is said to him "May you never know and may you never say what the people said!" Then he is struck between the ears with an iron hammer, and he utters a scream which everything can hear except for mankind and the jinn. This is narrated by Bukhari and Muslim; the version referred to here is narrated by Bukhari. Muslim says: "When a person is placed in his grave..." Then he mentioned something similar to the above, then he said: "We were told that (his grave) is expanded for him by seventy cubits, and it is filled with green until the Day when they will be resurrected." According to a report narrated by Abu Dawood, after the believing slave has been questioned and has answered, "He is taken to a house in Hell which was for him, and it is said to him, 'This was for you, but Allah has saved you and has replaced it with a house in Paradise.' Then it is shown to him, and he says, 'Let me go and tell my family.' It is said to him, 'Settle down.'"[37]

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[36] *A saheeh hadith.*

[37] See these reports in *Jaami' al-Usool*, 11/173

What these *ahaadeeth* indicate is that every one (deceased) will be shown his final abode in his grave as long as he will remain in the grave. This was stated clearly by the Messenger (ﷺ). According to the hadith narrated by 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both), "The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

> 'When anyone of you dies, he is shown his abode morning and evening. If he is one of the people of Paradise, then he is one of the people of Paradise, and if he is one of the people of Hell, then he is one of the people of Hell. And it is said to him, 'This is your place until Allah resurrects you on the Day of Resurrection.'"'[38]

In *Sunan at-Tirmidhi* it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) that the Messenger (ﷺ) said that the two angels say to the believing slave, after he has answered their questions correctly: "We knew that you would say that." Then his grave is expanded for him, seventy cubits by seventy, and it is illuminated for him. Then it is said to him, 'Sleep." He says, "Let me go back to my family and tell them." They say, "Sleep like the bridegroom who will not be woken by anyone except the dearest of his family to him, until Allah resurrects you from your place of rest." But they say to the hypocrite, "We knew that you would say this." Then it is said to the earth, "Squeeze him." So it squeezes him until his ribs interlock, and he will be tormented until Allah resurrects him from his grave.[39]

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[38] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Baab al-Mayit yu'raḍ 'alayhi Maq'adahu fil-Ghadaat wal-'Ashaa, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 3/243. Muslim, *Kitaab al-Jannah, Baab 'Arḍ Maq'ad al-Mayyit min al-Jannah aw an-Naar*, 4/2199, hadith no. 2866

[39] A *ḥasan hadith* by Tirmidhi, *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Baab ma jaa'a fi 'Adhaab al-Qabr*, 3/383, hadith no. 1071

(3) Are the Muslims punished in their graves?

Al-Qurṭubi said: "Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Ḥaqq said: know that the punishment of the grave is not confined only to the *kaafireen* or the *munaafiqeen*; some of the believers will also have a share of that, each according to his deeds and what he has earned by his mistakes and errors."[40] The evidence that the believer may be punished in his grave because of the large number of sins he has committed will be quoted in detail in the following section.

(4) Reasons for the punishment of the grave

"The reasons for which people may be punished in their graves fall into two categories, general and specific. In the general category, people may be punished for their ignorance of Allah, for disobeying His commands and for committing sin."[41]

In the specific category, the texts mention many examples; below we shall quote those which we have come across in the *aḥaadeeth*.

(i) and (ii) Not taking precautions to prevent oneself from being soiled with urine, and spreading slander[42]

Bukhari and Muslim narrated from Ibn 'Abbaas (ﷺ) that: "The Prophet (ﷺ) passed by two graves and said,

> 'They are being punished but they are not being punished because of any major sin.' Then he said, 'Yes, one of them used to go around spreading slander, and the other used not to take precautions to prevent himself from being soiled with

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[40] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, 146

[41] *Lawaami' al-Anwaar al-Bahiyyah*, 2/17

[42] *Nameemah*: the meaning is to spread gossip for the purpose of stirring up trouble between people.

urine.' Then he took a fresh branch, broke it in two, and planted each part on a grave, then he said, 'Perhaps it may reduced for them, so long as this does not dry out.'"[43]

Nasaa'i narrated that 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ) said: "A Jewish woman visited me and said, 'The torment of the grave is because of urine.' I said, 'You are lying.' She said, 'Indeed (it is true). We clean our skin and clothes of it.' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was going out to pray, and our voices were loud. He said, 'What is happening?' I told him what she had said, and he said, 'She spoke the truth.'" ('Aa'ishah) said: "After that, he never prayed but at the end of the prayer he would say, *'Rabba Jibraa'eel wa Mikaa'eel wa Israafeel, a'idhni min ḥarr an-naar wa 'adhaab al-qabr* (Lord of Jibraa'eel, Mikaa'eel and Israafeel, protect me from the heat of Hellfire and the torment of the grave).'"[44]

This hadith refers to that the Children of Israel used to cleanse their skin and clothes of urine it was part of the religious teachings which Allah prescribed for them. Thus, anyone who does not pay heed to it will be punished in his grave. According to the hadith of 'Abd ar-Raḥmaan ibn Ḥasanah, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

"Do you not know what happened to a man from among the Children of Israel? If any urine fell onto their clothes, they would cut out the part of the garment that it had fallen onto. He told them not to do that, and he was punished in his grave for that."[45]

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[43] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Baab 'Adhaab al-Qabr min al-Gheebah wal-Bawl, Fatḥ al Baari*, 3/242; this version is narrated by him. Also Muslim, *Kitaab al-Eemaan, Baab ad-Daleel 'ala Najaasat al-Bawl*, 1/240, hadith no. 292; and by Nasaa'i, 4/106

[44] Nasaa'i; see *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 11/167

[45] Attributed in *Ṣaḥeeh al-Jaami'* (1/416) to Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi, Ibn Maajah, Ibn Ḥibbaan and Al-Ḥaakim

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) told us that most of the punishment in the grave is because of urine. Anas (ﷺ) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "Protect yourselves from urine, for most of the torment of the grave is because of it."

It is also narrated by Ibn 'Abbaas (ﷺ) with the wording, "Most of the punishment of the grave is because of urine, so protect yourselves from it." And it is narrated by Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) with the wording, "Most of the punishment of the grave is because of urine."[46]

(iii) *Ghalool* (taking from the war booty by stealth before it is distributed)

Another of the sins for which a person will be punished in the grave is *ghalool*. More than one *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith has been narrated concerning this. It is narrated that Abu Hurayrah said: "A man gave as a gift to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) a slave who was called Mid'am. Whilst Mid'am was bringing down a saddle for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), an arrow came out of nowhere and killed him. The people said, "How fortunate he is! Paradise is his," but the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> "No, by the One in Whose hand is my soul, the cloak which he took from the war-booty on the day of Khaybar before the booty had been shared out will burn him with fire." When the people heard that, a man came and brought one or two shoelaces to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, "A shoelace of fire" or "Two shoelaces of fire." (Bukhari and Muslim)[47]

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[46] This is narrated by Shaykh Naaṣir in *Irwaa' al-Ghaleel*. He said, (it is) *ṣaḥeeḥ*. He attributed the report of Anas to Ad-Daaraquṭni, the report of Ibn 'Abbaas to Ad-Daaraquṭni, Al-Ḥaakim, Al-Bazzaar and Aṭ-Ṭabaraani, and the report of Abu Hurayrah to Ibn Abi Shaybah, Ibn Maajah, Al-Aajuri, Al-Ḥaakim and Aḥmad. See *Irwaa' al-Ghaleel*, 1/311, hadith no., 280

[47] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 2/401

It is narrated that 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr said, "A man called Karkarah was appointed in charge of the luggage of the Prophet (ﷺ). He died, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'He is in Hell.' They went and found a cloak which he had taken by stealth from the war-booty." Bukhari.[48]

(iv) to (vii) Lying, neglecting the Qur'an, *zinaa* and *ribaa*

Allah showed His Messenger (ﷺ) different kinds of things for which some sinners will be punished. Bukhari narrated that Samurah ibn Jundub said: "When the Prophet (ﷺ) had prayed, he would turn to face us and ask, 'Who among you has seen a dream this night?' If anyone had seen a dream, he would describe it, and say whatever Allah willed he should say.

One day he asked us, 'Has any one of you seen a dream?' and we said, 'No.' He said, 'But last night I saw (in a dream) that two men came to me, took me by the hand and accompanied me to the Holy Land. There was a man sitting and another man standing with an iron hook in his hand. - Some of our companions said, narrating from Moosa (Moses), an iron hook in his hand, which he inserted into one corner of his mouth then tore (his face) to the back of his head, then he did the same on the other side. Then his face was restored, and the same thing happened again.

I (the Messenger) asked, "What is this?" They said, "Keep going." So we kept going until we came to a man who was lying on his back, with another man standing at his head, holding a rock or a stone with which he smashed his head. After he struck him, the rock rolled away and he ran after it. By the time he brought it back, the other man's head had been restored, and he struck it again.

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[48] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 2/402

I asked, "What is this?" They said, "Keep going." So we kept going until we came to a hole like a *tannoor* (a kind of oven) which was narrow at the top and wide at the bottom, under which a fire was lit. When it came near they rose up until they almost came out of it, and when it died down they went back down into it. In it were naked men and women.

I querried, "What is this?" They said, "Keep going." So we kept going until we came to a river of blood, in which a man was standing, and on the river bank was another man before whom were some stones. - Yazeed and Wahb ibn Jareer said, narrating from Jareer ibn Ḥaazim: on the river bank was a man, towards whom the man who was in the river started walking. When he wanted to come out, he threw a stone into his mouth and he went back to where he was before. And every time he wanted to come out, he threw a stone into his mouth and he went back to where he was before. -

I questioned, "What is this?" They said, "Keep going." So we kept going until we came to a green garden, in which there was a great tree, at the foot of which was an old man and children. In front of the tree there was a man stoking a fire. They took me up the tree, and took me into a house, and I never saw any finer house than that. In it there were old men, young men, women and children. Then they took me out of the house and up the tree, and into a house which was even better, in which there were old men and young men.

I said, "Tonight you have taken me around; tell me about the things that I have seen." They said, "Yes, (we will do that). The one whom you saw with his cheeks been torn open was a liar who used to tell lies which would spread far and wide. What you saw will be done to him until the Day of Resurrection. The one whom you saw with his head being smashed was a man to whom Allah taught the Qur'an, but he slept (and ignored it) at night and he did not act upon it by day. That will be done to him until the Day of Resurrection. The ones

whom you saw in the hole are the adulterers (those who commit *zinaa*), and the one whom you saw in the river was one who consumed *ribaa*. The old man at the foot of the tree was Ibraaheem [(Abraham) (ﷺ)] and the children around him were the children of mankind (who died in childhood). The one who was stoking the fire was Maalik, the Keeper of Hell. The first house which you entered is the home of the believers in general, and this house is the home of the *shuhadaa'* (martyrs). I am Jibreel (Gabriel), and this is Mikaa'eel. Now raise your head." So I raised my head, and I saw above me something like a cloud. They said, "This is your house." I said, "Let me enter my house." They said, "You have not yet completed your life on earth. When you complete it, you will come to your house.""'[49]

The debtor is detained in his grave by his debt

One of the things that adversely affect the deceased in his grave is his debt. It is narrated from Sa'd ibn al-Atwal (ﷺ) that his brother died and left behind three hundred dirhams, and he left children. He said, "I wanted to spend it on his children, but the Prophet of Allah (ﷺ) said to me, 'Your brother is being detained by his debt, (so go and) pay off his debts.' (So I went and paid off his debts, then I came back). I said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, I have paid them off, except for two dinars which a woman claimed, but she had no proof.' He said, 'Give them to her, for she is right.' (According to another report, 'for she is telling the truth')."[50]

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[49] Bukhari in *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Fath al-Baari*, 3/251

[50] Shaykh Naasiruddin al-Albaani said in *Ahkaam al-Janaa'iz* (p. 15), it is narrated by Ibn Maajah (2/82), Ahmad (4/136, 5/7) and Al-Bayhaqi (10/142). One of its isnads is *saheeh*, and the other is like its isnad in Ibn Maajah. It was classed as *saheeh* by Al-Boosayri in Az-Zawaa'id. The text of the hadith and the second narration are from Al-Bayhaqi; this text with additional material is also to be found in Ahmad.

The Messenger (ﷺ) said that this *Ṣaḥaabi* was being detained because of his debt. This detention may be explained by another hadith in which the Messenger (ﷺ) said: "He is being kept from Paradise because of his debt."

According to the hadith narrated by Samurah ibn Jundub, "The Prophet (ﷺ) performed the funeral prayer (according to another report, he prayed *Fajr*), and when he finished, he said,

> 'Is there anybody here from the family of So and so?' [The people kept quiet, for if he asked them something they would keep quiet (out of respect)]. He said that a few times (three times, and no one answered). (Then a man said, 'Here he is.') A man stood up at the back of the people, dragging his lower garment. [The Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'What kept you from answering me the first two times?] I did not hint at your name except for a good reason. So and so - and he mentioned a man from among them - is being kept away because of his debt (from Paradise. If you wish, you can ransom him, or if you wish you can leave him to the punishment of Allah).' If only you could have seen his family and those who had anything to do with him getting up and paying off his debts (until there was no one left to make any demands of him)."[51]

[51] Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani said in *Aḥkaam al-Janaa'iz* (p. 15): it was narrated by Abu Dawood (2/84), An-Nasaa'i (2/233), Al-Ḥaakim (2/25, 26), Al-Bayhaqi (6/4/76), At-Tayaaliṣi in his *Musnad* (no. 891, 892) and Aḥmad (5/11, 13.20). Some of them narrated from Ash-Shu'bi from Samurah, and some inserted between them (in the isnad) Sam'aan ibn Mushannaj. The former is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of the two Shaykhs (Bukhari and Muslim), as stated by Al-Ḥaakim, and Ad-Dhahabi agreed with him. The latter is *ṣaḥeeḥ* only. The Shaykh mentioned that there are those who narrated reports and additional material.

The torment of the dead because of the weeping of the living

When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭaab (رضي الله عنه) was stabbed, Ṣuhayb called upon him weeping and saying, "O' my brother, O' my friend!" 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said, "O' Ṣuhayb, are you weeping for me when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'The deceased is tormented because of some of the weeping of his family for him?'"[52]

'Aa'ishah (رضي الله عنها) denied that the Messenger (ﷺ) said this hadith. In Bukhari it is narrated that after 'Umar died, 'Ibn 'Abbaas mentioned to 'Aa'ishah what 'Umar had said. She said, "May Allah have mercy on 'Umar. By Allah, the Messenger of Allah did not say that Allah would punish the believer for his family's weeping over him. But the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'Allah will increase the torment of the *kaafir* because of his family's weeping over him.'

The Qur'an is sufficient for you:

﴿وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ﴿١٨﴾﴾

﴾And no bearer of burdens shall bear another's burden.﴿ *(Qur'an 35: 18)*."[53]

'Aa'ishah (رضي الله عنها) interpreted this hadith in more than one way; this is narrated from her in the books of *Ṣaheeḥ* and *Sunan*.[54]

There are two issues here: the first is, did the Messenger (ﷺ) say this hadith? Qurṭubi said,"Aa'ishah denied that, and she said that the

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[52] This hadith is narrated by Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Baab Qawl an-Nabi Yu'adhdhab al-Mayit bi ba'd Bikaa'i ahlihi 'alayhi'*, *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 3/151. It is also narrated by Muslim. See *Ṣaheeḥ al-Jaami'*, 11/92

[53] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz*; see *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 3/151

[54] If you wish to know more about these interpretations, see *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 3/152

narrator made a mistake or was forgetful, or that he heard part of it and not the other part, because the narrators among the *Ṣaḥaabah* who transmitted this meaning were many and they were certain, so there is no reason to deny the hadith when it is possible to interpret it in an acceptable manner."[55]

The second is: how can he be tormented because of his family's weeping for him when that is not his action and Allah, the Exalted, says: ﴾And no bearer of burdens shall bear another's burden.﴿ *(Qur'an 35: 18)*?

The scholars answered this question in several ways, the best of which is what Bukhari said in his commentary on the chapter in which he included this hadith. He (may Allah have mercy on him) said under the "Chapter: the words of the Prophet (ﷺ), 'The deceased is tormented because of some of the wailing over him, if that wailing was the custom of that dead person,' because Allah (ﷻ) says,

﴾... قُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا ... ﴿

﴾...Ward off yourselves and your families against a Fire...﴿ *(Qur'an 66: 6)*

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock.' But if that (wailing) was not his custom, then it is as 'Aa'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said, (quoting the Qur'an), ﴾And no bearer of burdens shall bear another's burden.﴿ *(Qur'an 35:18)*."[56]

Among those who held this view was Tirmidhi (may Allah have mercy on him). He narrated the hadith of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) with the wording "The deceased is tormented because of his family's weeping for him." Then he said: Abu 'Eesa (Tirmidhi) said: the hadith of

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[55] *Fath al-Baari*, 3/154

[56] *Ibid*, 150

'Umar is a *ṣaḥeeḥ ḥasan hadith*. Some of the scholars regarded it as *makrooh* to weep for the dead; they said that the deceased is tormented because of the weeping of his family for him, and they referred to this hadith. Ibn al-Mubaarak said: I hope that if he used to forbid it (wailing) during his lifetime, that he will not be held to blame for it.[57]

This understanding of the hadith was the view of Qurṭubi, who said: "Some or most of the scholars said that the dead are tormented because of the weeping of the living if such weeping was the custom and preference of the deceased... The same is true if he left instructions that this should be done."[58]

Wailing, slapping one's cheeks and rending one's garments were all habits of the people of the *Jaahiliyyah*. "They used to request their families to weep and wail over them, and to announce the news of their passing to the different tribes. This was a well-known custom among them, and is commonly referred to in their poems. The deceased deserves to be punished for that because of what he told them during his lifetime." This is the view of Ibn al-Atheer.[59]

We must take note here of the version narrated by Bukhari, in which it says: "The deceased is tormented because of some of the weeping of his family over him" - he will not be tormented because of all of the weeping. The weeping which means that tears flow from the eyes, which does not involve rending the garments or slapping the cheeks, is not something for which a person will be blamed. This is stated in many reports.

The great scholar Ibn Taymiyah also discussed this matter. He regarded as weak (*ḍa'eef*) the view of Bukhari, Qurṭubi, Ibn 'Abd al-

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[57] *Sunan at-Tirmidhi*, 3/326

[58] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, 102

[59] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, by Ibn al-Atheer, 102

Barr and those who followed their lead in interpreting the *aḥaadeeth* which say that the deceased is tormented because of the weeping of the living. After mentioning the texts which have been narrated concerning that, he (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "This has been denied by many among the earlier and later generations; they regarded that as punishing a man for the sins of another, which is contrary to the *aayah*: ﴾And no bearer of burdens shall bear another's burden...﴿ *(Qur'an 35: 18)*

They had different ways of dealing with those *ṣaḥeeḥ aḥaadeeth*.

Some of them suggested that the narrators, such as 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭaab and others, were mistaken. This is the view of 'Aa'ishah, Al-Shaafa'i and others. Some interpreted it as being the case if the deceased had requested that (wailing), and so he is to be punished for his request. This is the view of a group which included Al-Mazani and others.

Some of them interpreted it as being the case if that was the people's custom, and the deceased would be punished for not forbidding this evil. This is the view of a group which included my (Ibn Taymiyah's) grandfather Abul-Barakaat. All of these views are very weak (*ḍa'eef jiddan*)."[60] He refuted the view of those who rejected these *aḥaadeeth* because of the way in which they understood them, and said:

"The clear *ṣaḥeeḥ aḥaadeeth* which were narrated by people such as 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭaab, his son 'Abdullah, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari and others, cannot be rejected on this basis. 'Aa'ishah Umm al-Mu'mineen did this with other *aḥaadeeth*, when she rejected them because of the way that she understood them and thought that the meaning she understood was incorrect. But this is not the case.

[60] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 24/370

Whoever thinks about this matter will find that this clear, *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith, transmitted by trustworthy narrators cannot be rejected on this basis, except by mistake."[61]

Then he (may Allah have mercy on him) explained that 'Aa'ishah made the same mistake that she was trying to avoid. He said: 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ) narrated two versions from the Prophet (ﷺ) - and she is a trustworthy narrator. She narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Allah will increase the torment of the *kaafir* because of his family's weeping over him." This is in agreement with the hadith of 'Umar, because if it is possible for the *kaafir's* torment to be increased because of his family's weeping over him, it is possible for others to be tormented because of their family's weeping as well. Hence in *Mukhtalif al-Hadith*, Imam Shaafa'i rejected this hadith because of the meaning, and said that that the other version is more likely to be *ṣaḥeeḥ*: "They are weeping for him, and he is being tormented in his grave."[62]

He narrated the view of those who thought that this hadith means that a person may be punished for the sins of others and said: "Of those who accepted this hadith and interpreted it in this way, some of them thought that this was a case of punishing a man for the sins of another, and that Allah does whatever He wills and decrees whatever He wants. They believed that a man could be punished for the sins of another, so they believed that it was possible that the children of the *kuffaar* would enter Hell because of the sins of their fathers."[63] After discussing this issue - whether the children of the *kuffaar* will enter hell because of the sins of their fathers - at length, he said that this is not correct. The truth is that Allah does not punish anyone except

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[61] Opt. cit, 24/370

[62] *Ibid*, 24/371

[63] *Ibid.*

those who disobey Him, and that those who are not tested (in this life) will be tested on the Day of Resurrection. He said, "As for the torment of the deceased, it does not say that the deceased is punished for the weeping of his family over him; what it says is 'tormented (*yu'adhdhab*)'. Torment (*'adhaab*) is more general than punishment (*'iqaab*). Torment means pain, but not everyone who suffers pain for some reason is being punished because of that reason. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

> 'Travel is a kind of torment; it keeps a person from his food and drink.' He called travel a torment, but it is not a punishment.

A person may be tormented by unpleasant things that he encounters, such as loud voices, evil people or horrible images. He may be tormented by what he hears, smells or sees, but this is not because of something that he did for which he is being punished. So how can we deny that the deceased is tormented by (his family's) wailing, even though this is not something that he did for which he would deserve to be punished?

The person in the grave suffers because of what some people say and because of what he hears or sees. Hence Qaaḍi Abu Ya'la stated in a *fatwa* that when sins are committed near (graves), the deceased suffer because of that, as is stated in some reports. Their suffering because of sins committed near their graves is akin to their suffering because of the wailing of those who wail over them, so the wailing is the cause of the torment."[64]

The conclusion which the Shaykh (Ibn Taymiyah) reached to is also indicated in some *aḥaadeeth*. It is narrated that An-Nu'maan ibn Basheer said: "Abdullah ibn Rawaahaḥ (رضي الله عنه) fell unconscious, and his sister 'Amrah started weeping and crying. 'O' my rock (my

[64] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa, Kitaab al-Maghaazi, Baab Ghazwat Mu'tah*

support)!' and so on and so forth, making a list of eulogies. When he woke up, he said, 'You did not say anything but it was said to me, "Are you really like that?!"' When he died, she did not weep for him."[65] This meaning was in fact clearly stated in the hadith narrated by Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, who said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "There is no person who dies, and someone starts to weep for him and say, 'O' my rock! O' my master!' and so on, but two angels are appointed over him and they strike him on the chest and say, 'Are you really like that?'" This is narrated by Tirmidhi, who said, this is a *ghareeb ḥasan hadith*.[66]

Al-Ḥaafiẓ said in *At-Talkheeṣ*, after quoting this hadith, "It is narrated and classed as *ṣaḥeeḥ* by Al-Ḥaakim, and there is a corroborating report in *Aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥ* from An-Nu'maan ibn Basheer."[67]

It is essential to point out here that not every dead person for whom others wail will be tormented because of that wailing. The cause of torment may be warded off by other means - as Ibn Taymiyah says - as is the case with those people who have the strength not to be affected by those loud voices, evil people and horrible scenes. Then he said that the *aḥaadeeth* which issue warnings mention the reasons for punishment, and that the things which make a punishment inevitable may vary according to the things that counteract it, be it acceptable repentance, good deeds which cancel out bad deeds, calamities which expiate for sin, the intercession of one whose word is accepted, or by the grace, mercy and forgiveness of Allah. In conclusion, he explained that the torment suffered by

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[65] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Maghaazi, Baab Ghazwat Mu'tah*

[66] *Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Baab ma jaa' fi Kiraahiyat al-Bikaa' 'ala al-Mayit*, 3/326, hadith no. 1003

[67] *Talkheeṣ al-Ḥabeer* by Ibn Ḥajar, 2/140, hadith no. 806

the deceased believer in his grave because of others' wailing over him will be the means by which Allah causes the expiation of his bad deeds.[68]

(5) Things which save one from the trial and torment of the grave

What can save a person from the torment of the grave is to be prepared and ready for death, so even if death comes suddenly, there will be no cause for regret. Some of the ways of preparing for death are hastening to repent, fulfilling one's obligations and doing a lot of righteous deeds, because faith, prayer, fasting, *zakaah*, ḥajj, jihaad, honouring one's parents, upholding the ties of kinship, remembering Allah (*dhikr*) and other kinds of righteous deeds will protect the believer, and by means of these righteous deeds Allah will provide him a way out from every difficulty.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) told us that righteous deeds will protect a person in his grave. Ibn Taymiyah said: "According to the famous hadith of Muhammad ibn 'Amr, from Abu Salamah, from Abu Hurayrah from the Prophet (ﷺ), narrated by Abu Ḥaatim in his *Saḥeeḥ* and by the Imams, he said: 'The deceased can hear their footsteps as they depart from him. If he was a believer, prayer stands by his head, fasting stands to his right, *zakaah* stands to his left and good deeds such as honesty, upholding ties of kinship and treating people kindly stand at his feet. He is approached from the direction of his head, and prayer says, "You cannot get past me." Then he is approached from the right, and fasting says, "You cannot get past me." Then he is approached from the left, and *zakaah* says, "You cannot get past me." Then he is approached from the direction of his feet, and his good deeds such as honesty, upholding ties of kinship

[68] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 4/375

and treating people kindly say, "You cannot get past me." Then it is said to him, "Sit up," and he sits up. Then the sun is made to appear to him as if it is about to set, and it is said to him, "Who is this man who was among you? What do you say about him?" He says, "Let me pray." They say, "You will do that, but tell us about what we asked you about." He says, "What did you ask me about?" They say, "What do you say about this man who was among you? What is your testimony concerning him?" He says, "I bear witness that he is the Messenger of Allah, and that he brought the truth from Allah." It is said to him, "In this belief you lived and in this belief you died, and in this belief you will be resurrected, *in sha Allah.*" Then one of the gates of Paradise is opened for him, and it is said to him, "That is your place therein, and what Allah has prepared for you therein," and his joy and happiness increase. Then one of the gates of Hell is opened for him, and it is said, "That was your place therein and what Allah has prepared for you therein (if you had disobeyed Allah)," and his joy and happiness increase. Then his grave is expanded for him by seventy cubits, and it is illuminated for him, and his body is put back as it was, and his soul is placed in nasm aṭ-ṭeeb, which is a bird that perches in a tree in Paradise.'"'"

Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) said (quoting the Qur'an):

﴿يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱلْقَوْلِ ٱلثَّابِتِ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ... ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

﴾Allah will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world [i.e. they will keep on worshipping Allah Alone and none else], and in the Hereafter...﴿ *(Qur'an 14: 27)*

According to another version: "Then his body is put back as it was."

Seeking refuge with Allah from the trial of the grave and the torment of the grave

Because the trial of the grave and the torment of the grave are major terrors and severe hardships, the Messenger (ﷺ) used to seek refuge with Allah from that in his prayer and at other times, and he used to tell his Companions to do likewise.

According to the hadith of 'Aa'ishah, a Jewish woman said to her, "May Allah protect you from the torment of the grave." She asked the Messenger (ﷺ) about the torment of the grave, and he said, "Yes, the torment of the grave." 'Aa'ishah said, "After that I never saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) pray any prayer but he sought refuge with Allah from the torment of the grave." Ghandar added: "The torment of the grave is real."[69]

It is narrated from Anas (ﷺ) that the Messenger (ﷺ) used to supplicate, *"Allahumma innee a'oodhu bika min al-'ajz wal-kasal wal-jubun wal-bukhl wal-haram, wa a'oodhu bika min 'adhaab al-qabr, wa 'aoodhu bika min fitnat il-maḥyaa wal-mamaat* (O Allah, I seek refuge with You from incapacity, laziness, cowardliness, miserliness and old age; I seek refuge with You from the torment of the grave; and I seek refuge with You from the trials of life and death."[70]

It is narrated from 'Aa'ishah that the Messenger (ﷺ) used to say, *"Allahumma inni a'oodhu bika min al-kasl wal-haram wal-ma'tham wal-maghram, wa min fitnat al-qabr wa 'adhaab al-qabr* (O' Allah, I

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[69] Bukhari: *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Baab 'Adhaab al-Qabr, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/232). Also Muslim, *Kitaab al-Masaajid, Baab Istiḥbaab at-Ta'awwudh min 'Adhaab al-Qabr*, 1/410)

[70] Shaykh Naaṣiruddin said in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'* (1/406): it is narrated by Aḥmad, Bukhari and Muslim.

seek refuge with You from laziness, old age, sin and debt, and from the trial of the grave and the torment of the grave)."[71]

The Messenger (ﷺ) used to say to his Companions, "Seek refuge with Allah from the torment of the grave," and they would say, *"Na'oodhu Billaahi min 'adhaab al-qabr* (we seek refuge with Allah from the torment of the grave)."[72]

And he used to say to them, "Seek Allah's protection from the torment of the grave, for the torment of the grave is real."[73] And he used to tell them to seek refuge with Allah from four things: "Seek refuge with Allah from the torment of the grave; seek refuge with Allah from Hell; seek refuge with Allah from the trial of *Al-Maseeḥ ad-Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ); seek refuge with Allah from the trials of life and death."[74]

He used to tell them to seek refuge with Allah from the torment of the grave in their prayers, after reciting the *Tashahhud*. It is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) stated, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

'When anyone of you recites the *Tashahhud*, let him seek refuge with Allah from four things, and say, *"Allahumma inni a'oodhu bika min 'adhaab Jahannam, wa min 'adhaab al-qabr, wa min fitnat il-maḥyaa wal-mamaat, wa min sharri fitnat il-Maseeḥ ad-Dajjaal* [O' Allah, I seek refuge with you from the torment of Hell, from the torment of the grave, from the trials of life and death, and from the evil of the trial of *Al-Maseeḥ ad-Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ)].""'[75]

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[71] Attributed in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'* (1/407) to Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasaa'i and Ibn Maajah

[72] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Jannah, Baab 'Arḍ Maq'ad al-Mayit min al-Jannah aw an-Naar 'alayhi*, 4/2199

[73] Aṭ-Ṭabaraani with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad. See *Ṣaheeḥ al-Jaami', 1/317*

[74] Attributed in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'* (1/320) to Tirmidhi and Nasaa'i

[75] Muslim; *Kitaab al-Masaajid, Baab ma yusta'aadh minhu fiṣ-Ṣalaah*, 1/412, hadith no. 588

It is narrated from Ibn 'Abbaas that the Messenger used to teach them this *du'aa'* as he taught them a soorah from the Qur'an: "*Allahumma inni a'oodhu bika min 'adhaab Jahannam, wa a'oodhu bika min 'adhaab al-qabr, wa a'oodhu bika min fitnat al-maseeḥ ad-Dajjaal, wa a'oodhu bika min fitnat il-maḥyaa wal-mamaat* (O' Allah, I seek refuge with You from the torment of Hell, I seek refuge with You from the torment of the grave, I seek refuge with You from the trial of the *Dajjaal*, and I seek refuge with You from the trials of life and death)."[76]

(6) Those who are protected from the trial and torment of the grave

Some of the believers who do great good deeds or who suffer immense calamities will be protected from the trial and torment of the grave. Among them are the following:

1) The *shaheed* (martyr). Al-Miqdaam ibn Ma'di Karb narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The *shaheed* will have six blessings from Allah: he will be forgiven from the first drop of blood shed; he will be shown his place in Paradise; he will be spared the torment of the grave; he will be protected from the greater terror (of the Day of Judgement); A crown of dignity, will be placed on his head, one ruby of which is better than this world and all that is in it; he will be married to seventy two of *al-ḥoor al-'iyn*; and he will be permitted to intercede for seventy of his relatives." This is narrated by Tirmidhi and Ibn Maajah.[77]

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[76] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Masaajid, Baab ma yusta'aadh minhu fiṣ-Ṣalaah*, 1/412, hadith no. 590

[77] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 2/358. Its isnad is *ḥasan* as stated by the editor of *al-Mishkaat*, Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani.

Nasaa'i narrated in his *Sunan* from Raashid ibn Sa'd from one of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that a man said, "O' Messenger of Allah, why will the believers be tried in their graves, apart from the *shaheed*?" He said,

> "The flashing of the sword above his head is sufficient trial for him."[78]

2) The one who dies as a *muraabiṭ*[79] for the sake of Allah. Faḍaalah ibn 'Ubayd narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "For every person who dies, his deeds come to an end, except for the one who dies as a *muraabiṭ* (guard) for the sake of Allah. Allah will make his good deeds grow on the Day of Resurrection, and will protect him from the trial of the grave." This is narrated by Tirmidhi and Abu Dawood.[80]

3) The one who dies on Friday. According to the hadith of 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "There is no Muslim who dies on Friday, but Allah will save him from the trial of the grave."

This is narrated by Aḥmad and Tirmidhi, and the hadith is *ṣaḥeeḥ* or *ḥasan* when all its isnads are taken into account.[81]

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[78] Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. See *Aḥkaam al-Janaa'iz* by Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani: 36; and *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'*, 4/164

[79] *Muraabiṭ*: one who stands guard at the borders of Islam. The word is derived from *rabṭ al-khayl* (tying a horse), then it was applied to anyone who guards one of the Muslims' borders, regardless of whether he is cavalry or infantry. (Author)

[80] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 2/355. Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* as stated by the editor of *Al-Mishkaat*

[81] Aḥmad and Tirmidhi, and the hadith is *ṣaḥeeḥ* or *ḥasan* when all its isnads are taken into account. *Aḥkaam al-Janaa'iz*, 35

4) The one who dies of a stomach disease. It is reported in a hadith narrated by 'Abdullah ibn Yasaar: "I was sitting with Sulaymaan ibn Ṣard and Khaalid ibn 'Arfaṭah, and they said that a man had passed away. He had died of a stomach disease, and they wished that they had attended his funeral. One of them said to the other, 'Didn't the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

> "Whoever dies of a stomach disease will not be tormented in his grave?"' And the other said, 'Yes, he did.'" According to another report, "You have spoken the truth."[82]

5 - The Lessons of Death

(1) Death is the greatest lesson

We have quoted above the texts which speak of death and its stupor, and the grave and its terrors. The wise man is the one who learns a lesson from this, for death is the greatest lesson. It was said to one of the ascetics (*zaahid*), "What is the most eloquent lesson?" He said, "Looking at the dead."[83] Qurṭubi described death very well when he said: "Know that death is the greatest calamity, the most terrifying thing, the cup whose taste is most hateful and bitter. It is the destroyer of delights, which puts an end to all comforts and brings all that you dislike. The thing that cuts off your limbs, separates your body parts and destroys your strength is indeed a terrifying thing, an immense calamity, and the day when it happens is a terrible day."[84]

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[82] Shaykh Naaṣir said in *Aḥkaam al-Janaa'iz*: it was narrated by Nasaa'i and by Tirmidhi, who classed it as *ḥasan*. Also narrated by Ibn Ḥibbaan in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*, and by At-Ṭayaalisi and Aḥmad. Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. (*Aḥkaam al-Janaa'iz*, p. 38)

[83] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭabi*, 99

[84] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, 24

(2) Thinking about death

Just as life is one of the signs of Allah, so too death is another sign, the opposite of life, which is no less wondrous.

﴿كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾﴾

﴾How can you disbelieve in Allah? Seeing that you were dead and He gave you life. Then He will give you death, then again will bring you to life [on the Day of Resurrection] and then unto Him you will return.﴿

(Qur'an 2: 28)

Thinking about this *aayah* means thinking about one of the wonders of Allah's creation which points to the great power of Allah. It is narrated that a Bedouin was travelling on his camel. It fell and dead. The Bedouin got off the camel and started walking around it, pondering the matter, and saying, "Why won't you get up? Why won't you move? Your limbs are all there, your faculties are all sound. What is wrong with you? What was it that made you alive and kept you moving? What made you fall dead? What is stopping you from moving?" Then he went away, wondering at this matter.[85]

(3) Examples of lessons

Allah told His Messenger about death, and said:

﴿إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُم مَّيِّتُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾

﴾Verily, you [O' Muhammad] will die, and verily, they [too] will die.﴿ *(Qur'an 39: 30)*

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[85] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, p. 5

According to a hadith narrated by Aṭ-Ṭabaraani in *Al-Awsaṭ*, Abu Na'eem in *Al-Ḥilyah*, Al-Ḥaakim in *Al-Mustadrak* and others, 'Ali (ﷺ) reported: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Jibreel (Gabriel) came to me and said, "O' Muhammad, live as long as you like, for you are going to die. Love whomever you want, for you are going to leave them. Do whatever you want, for you are going to be requited for it. Know that the honour of the believer is his standing in prayer at night, and his pride is in his independence from the people."'"[86]

We have quoted many of the texts in which Allah and His Messenger have taught us about death. It was the habit of the righteous to remind themselves about death and to preach to the people about it. 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭaalib (ﷺ) said: "This world is moving away from us, and the Hereafter is moving towards us. Each of them has its own people, so be among the people of the Hereafter, do not be among the people of this world. Today is striving, not reckoning, but tomorrow will be reckoning and not striving." This is narrated by Bukhari in the chapter "Hoping to live long."[87]

Among the lessons taught by the scholars is that which was quoted in *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*: "Think, O' you who are deceived by this world, of death and its agonies, how difficult and bitter a cup it is. What a true promise death is! How fair a judge it is! Death is enough to fill the heart with fear and the eyes with tears, to separate people, destroy pleasure and put an end to all worldly hopes.

Have you given any thought, O' son of Adam, to the day when you will die and will be taken out of your place? When you will move from the spaciousness (of this world) to the confines (of the grave),

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[86] *Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 2/505, hadith no. 831

[87] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 2/659, hadith no. 5215

when friends and loved ones will let you down, and brothers and friends will desert you? When you will be taken from your bed and placed in a hole in the ground, and instead of a soft blanket you will be covered with dust and earth? O' gatherer of wealth, O' industrious builder, by Allah you will have nothing left of your possessions except shrouds, and even they will be destroyed and will vanish as your body disintegrates and turns to dust.

Where is the wealth that you amassed? Will it save you from these terrors? No indeed, you have left it behind for those who will not praise you, and you have come with your burdens (of sin) to One Who will not excuse you."[88]

Qurṭubi narrated that Yazeed al-Riqaashi used to say to himself: "Woe to you, O' Yazeed. Who will pray on your behalf after you die? Who will fast on your behalf after you die? Who will make Allah be pleased with you after you die?"

Then he said: "O' people, why do you not weep and wail for yourselves for the rest of your lives? When you are being sought by the grave, when the grave is home, the earth your bed, the worms your companions, and you will be awaiting the greater terror?"[89]

Qurṭubi said elsewhere: "Imagine yourself, O' you who have been deceived by this world, when the agony and stupor of death overwhelms you, and you start moaning in the throes of death. There will be some who will say, So and so has made a will, and his wealth has been calculated; others will say, So and so can no longer speak, he does not recognize his neighbours and he does not speak to his brothers. It is as if I can see you listening to these words and unable to respond. Imagine yourself, O' son of Adam, being taken from your

[88] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, p. 9

[89] *Ibid*, p. 9

bed to the place where your body will be washed and shrouded, and being forsaken by your family and neighbours, wept over by your friends and brothers. Imagine the one who has washed your body saying, 'Where is the wife of So and so to forgive him? Where are the orphans? Your father has left you and you will never see him again after this day.'"[90]

In one of the lessons preached by the great *Saḥaabi* Abu-Dardaa', he said: "Three things make me smile, and three things make me weep. The things that make me smile are: the man who has great hopes in this world whilst death is seeking him, the one who ignores death but it does not ignore him, and the one who laughs out loud but he does not know whether Allah is pleased with him or angry.

The things that make me weep are: departing from Muhammad (ﷺ) and his Companions, the terrifying moments at the point of death, and standing before Allah on the Day when all secrets will be made known and not knowing whether one is heading for Paradise or for Hell."[91]

Abu-Dardaa' or Abu Dharr said: "You give birth to those who are going to die, you build that which will be destroyed, you focus on that which will pass away, and you neglect that which will remain."[92]

Qurṭubi gave the following advice in his *Tadhkirah*:

"Where is the wealth that you have gathered and prepared for hardship and terror? There is no money in your hand when you are dying. The wealth and pride that you enjoyed have been replaced with humiliation and poverty. What has become of you, O' prisoner

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[90] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, p. 21

[91] *Ibid.*, p. 87

[92] *Kitaab az-Zuhd war-Raqaa'iq* by Ibn al-Mubaarak, p. 88

of your burdens, O' you who have been taken away from your family and your home?

What was it that concealed the right path from you, and caused you to have no interest in making provision for your long journey and time of difficulty? Did you not know, O' you who were deceived by this world, that this journey to the Day of intense horror was inevitable, when the time spent in gossip would be to no avail? That is the Day when you are standing before the Sovereign, the Judge, and the blows struck by your hands, the places where your feet took you, the words uttered by your tongue, the actions of all your limbs and faculties, will be counted against you. If Allah has mercy on you, you will go to Paradise, otherwise you will go to the Fire of Hell.

O' negligent one who ignores these matters, how long will this negligence last? How long will you delay? Do you think that the issue is insignificant? Do you think that the matter is easy? Do you think that your situation will help you when it is time for you to depart? Or that your wealth will save you when your actions condemn you? Or that your regret will help you when your feet are slipping? Or that your friends will show you any sympathy when you are gathered (for judgement)? No, by Allah, you are wrong in your thinking, and you will inevitably come to know the reality. You are not content with enough, you never have your fill of that which is *ḥaraam*, you do not listen to lessons, you are not deterred by warnings. You persist in following your desires and you go about your life without guidance. You are happy with the things that you have accumulated but you do not think of what lies ahead. O' you who are sleeping unawares, wandering without guidance, for how long will the neglect last? Do you think that you will be left alone and let off, and that you will not be brought to account tomorrow? Or do you think that death can be bribed? Or do you think that death distinguishes between the lion and the gazelle?

No, by Allah, wealth and sons can never ward off death from you. Nothing can benefit those who will be forgiven except righteous deeds. So good news to those who listen and understand, who practice what they preach, and are deterred from following their whims and desires, those who know that the victor is the one who pays heed, and that man will have nothing except that for which he strives, and he will see what he has striven for. So wake up from this negligence, and make righteous deeds the provision with which you equip yourselves. Do not wish to attain the status of the righteous when you are weighed down with burdens (of sin), doing immoral deeds, when Allah is watching you even when you are alone. Do not be so deceived by hopes and wishes that you neglect to strive. One poet said:

'Take provision from this life to help yourself in the Hereafter.

Strive for the sake of Allah and do good deeds.

Do not accumulate too much in this world,

For that accumulation will eventually diminish.

Would you like to accompany people

Who have provision when you do not?'"[93]

(4) More lessons from Arabic poetry

Poets often mentioned death and used it as a lesson. For example, the poet said:

"Nothing of what you see will keep its beauty.

Allah will remain, whilst wealth and children will pass away.

The treasure of Hormuz was of no help to him,

And 'Aad tried to live forever, but they failed.

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[93] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, 91

Sulaymaan did not live forever, although the wind was subjugated to him,

As were men and jinn, who paraded before him.

Where are the kings in whose honour

Delegations came from all directions?

Like a trough from which all and sundry come and drink,

One day we too shall drink from it, just as they did."

Another poet said:

"We walk the steps which are written for us.

Whoever is decreed to walk certain steps will do so.

Our provision is scattered,

So if a person's provision does not come to him, he will go and get it.

Whoever is decreed to die in a certain land,

Will never die in any other land."

Another poet said:

"If you are put in charge of some people one night,

Know that you will subsequently be responsible.

If you carry a person to his grave,

Know that one day you too will be carried."

Another poet said:

"Take provision from this world, for you never know

When night comes, will you live until morning?

How often has a bride been adorned for her husband,

When it has been decreed on *Laylat al-Qadr* that their souls will be taken that year?

How often has a young man hoped for a long life,

Then his soul has entered the darkness of the grave?

How many healthy people have died without illness,

And how many chronically sick people have lived for years?

How often have young people spent day and night in play,

When their shrouds have already been prepared for them, but they do not know?

How many of those who started the day dwelling in palaces,

Have ended up dwelling in the tomb by nightfall?

Be sincere, and always do good,

Maybe you will earn the reward.

Always fear Allah, because

That will be your protection from the horrors in the place of gathering."

Another poet said:

"Suppose that worldly joys come to you easily,

Will you not eventually depart from them?

Your life in this world is like shade

That covers you briefly, then disappears."

Another poet said:

"O you who feel so settled in this world,

After this ease will come a very hard Day.

Death brings agony so watch for that,

No doctor could help you when that begins.

How much you delay until you become a prisoner (of your sin),

Then comes the call (of death) and you answer.

Remember the Day when you will be brought to account.

The one who remembers death should turn back to Allah.
There is no moment of your life
When death is not watching and waiting.
Every day it aims an arrow at you.
If it misses you one day, soon it will hit you."

Another poet said:

"Every day, death is preparing the shroud,
But we are unaware of what is going to happen to us.
Do not be content with this world and its joys,
Even though it may adorn itself with its finery.
Where are our loved one and neighbours, what did they do?
Where are those with whom we used to feel happy?
Death gave them a bitter cup to drink,
And kept them prisoners underground."

Another poet said:

"Repent sincerely
Before death comes and your tongue cannot speak.
Hasten to do this before death comes, for it
Is provision and booty for the one who turns back to Allah and does good."

(5) The effect of remembering death on reforming people

Remembering death has a great impact on reforming and disciplining people. That is because people are influenced by this world and its delights, so they hope to live long in this world. They may be inclined towards sin and disobedience, and they may fall short in obedience. But if death is always on a person's mind, then

this world will become less significant in his sight and that will make him strive to reform himself and put right whatever is wrong in his case. It is narrated by Al-Bayhaqi in *Shu'ab al-Eemaan*, Ibn Ḥibbaan in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* and by Al-Bazzaar in his *Musnad* with a *ḥasan* isnad that Anas ibn Maalik (ﷺ) related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Remember often the destroyer of pleasure, death, for no one remembers death in times of hardship but that makes him feel better, and no one remembers death in times of ease but that restrains him.'"[94]

Ibn al-Mubaarak mentioned that Ṣaaliḥ al-Murri used to say, "If I cease to remember death for a moment, my heart goes corrupt."[95]

Ad-Daqqaaq said: "Whoever remembers death often will be honoured with three things: he will hasten to repent, he will be content with his lot, and he will have the energy for worship. Whoever forgets about death, three things will happen to him: he will delay repentance, he will not be content with what he has and he will be lazy when it comes to worship."[96]

Qurṭubi said: "Know that remembrance of death results in feeling discontent with this temporary life and focusing at every moment on the eternal life of the Hereafter."[97] It is narrated that a woman complained to 'Aa'ishah of the hardness in her heart. She said to her: "Remember death often, for that will soften your heart." She did that, and her heart was softened.[98]

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[94] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 1/388, ḥadith no. 1222

[95] *Az-Zuhd war-Raqaa'iq* by Ibn al-Mubaarak, p. 88

[96] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, p. 9

[97] *Tadhkirat al-Qurṭubi*, p. 8

[98] *Ibid*

Qurṭubi related: the scholars said: remembering death deters one from sin, softens the hard heart, stops one from delighting in this world, and makes disasters look bearable.[99]

Qurṭubi also wrote: the scholars - may Allah have mercy on them - said: there is nothing more beneficial to people's hearts than visiting graves, especially if their hearts are hard. Those whose hearts are hard must treat them with three things:

(i) Giving up the things in which they are wasting their time, and attending gatherings of knowledge in which they will hear lessons of warning (about Hell), encouragement (to strive for Paradise) and stories of the righteous, for all of these are things which soften the heart.
(ii) Remembering death: calling to mind frequently the destroyer of pleasures, that which separates people and makes orphans of sons and daughters.
(iii) Looking at those who are dying, because looking at the dying and seeing the agony and stupor of death, and thinking about these images after he has passed away, will cut a person off from his pleasures and expel any feelings of joy from his heart; it will keep him awake at night and deprive him of his rest; it will motivate him to strive and make him try harder.[100]

It is narrated that Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri went to see a sick man whom he used to visit, and he found him in the agony of death. He looked at his distress and the hardship that he was suffering, then he went back to his family with a different expression than that with which he had left them. They said to him, "Food is ready, may Allah have mercy on you." He said, "O my family, enjoy your food and drink, for by Allah

[99] *Ibid*

[100] *Ibid*

I have seen death and I will keep striving for that until I meet Him (Allah)."[101]

Abu-Dardaa' said: "Whoever remembers death often, his joy will be reduced and his envy will be reduced."[102]

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[101] *Tadhkirat al-Qurtubi*, p. 12

[102] *Kitaab az-Zuhd* by Ibn al-Mubaarak; see the end of the book *Zawaa'id Kitaab az-Zuhd*, its narrator is Na'eem ibn Ḥammaad. p. 37

CHAPTER FIVE
THE SOUL: *AR-ROOḤ* AND *AN-NAFS* [1]

1 - Definitions

The one who investigates what will happen to man after he dies has to give some thought to the soul which will be blessed or punished after death: what is it? Does it have a shape that may be known? Is it a part of the body, or something other than the body? If it is something separate, then where in the body does it reside? Is it created? Is there one soul in the body, or many? Do souls die, and how? Where do they dwell in *Al-Barzakh*? Do souls know anything of what is happening in this world when they end up in *Al-Barzakh*?

Ibn Taymiyah said: "The soul which is controlling the body and which leaves it at the time of death is the *rooḥ* which was breathed into it. It is the *nafs* which departs at the time of death."[2]

Those who differentiate between the *rooḥ* and the *nafs*, and regard them as two separate things, are mistaken. Whoever ponders the texts that we have quoted will realize that the *nafs* is that which is seized by the angels and taken up to the heavens, then brought back to the body, questioned, then blessed or tormented. It is also the *rooḥ*

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[1] The Arabic words *rooḥ* and *nafs* may both be translated as "soul" and to some extent are interchangeable. The subsequent discussion examines the subtle differences between the meanings and usage of each word. Hence the Arabic words - which are familiar to many Muslims, no matter what their mother tongues, have been retained here. (Translator)

[2] *Risaalat al-'Aql war-Rooḥ, Majmoo' ar-Rasaa'il al-Muneeriyyah*, 2/36; see *Sharḥ al-'Aqeedah aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah*, 445

which, when it is brought forth from the body, is followed by the eyes, as is stated in the *aḥaadeeth*.

This created entity, the existence of which means life and the loss of which means death, is called both the *rooḥ* and the *nafs*. This does not mean that the words *rooḥ* and *nafs* may not be applied to other things. Ibn Taymiyah said: "The words *rooḥ* and *nafs* both carry a number of meanings. *Rooḥ* may refer to the air that leaves and enters the body, or the air that leaves the chambers of the heart through the valve that leads to the veins. This is what the doctors call *rooḥ*.[3] These meanings refer to something other than the *rooḥ* which departs from the body at the point of death, which is the *nafs*. The word *nafs* may also refer to a thing itself (*nafs ash-shay'* = the same thing), or its essence, or it may refer to the blood that exists in living beings, as in the saying of the *fuqaha'*: 'That which has flowing blood (*nafs*) and that which does not.' These two meanings of the word *nafs* do not refer to the *rooḥ*."[4]

The word *rooḥ* is also used to refer to Jibreel:

﴿نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٣﴾﴾

﴾Which the trustworthy *Rooḥ* [Jibreel (Gabriel)] has brought down.﴿ *(Qur'an 26: 193)*

And it is used to refer to the Qur'an:

﴿وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا ... ﴿٥٢﴾﴾

﴾And thus We have sent to you [O' Muhammad] *Rooḥ* [a revelation, and a mercy] of Our Command...﴿ *(Qur'an 42: 52)*

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[3] Ibn Taymiyah lived in the 13-14th century CE. His comments here reflect the medical knowledge and practice of his time. (Translator)

[4] op. cit., 2/39

The commentator on *Aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah* noted how the words *rooḥ* and *nafs* are used to refer to these subtle entities which Allah has created: "Usually the word *nafs* is used when the *rooḥ* is still connected to the body, but when it is referred to in isolation from the body, it is usually called *rooḥ*."[5]

Ibn Taymiyah said concerning this matter: "But it is called *nafs* with regard to its control over the body, and it is called rooḥ with regard to its subtle nature. Hence the wind is also called *rooḥ*, and the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> 'The wind is from the *rooḥ* of Allah,'[6] i.e., the *rooḥ* created by Allah."[7]

2 - Does the Soul Have a Shape that may be Understood?

Because the soul is created from a substance that has no comparison in the existing physical universe, we cannot come to know its qualities. Allah has told us that it ascends and descends, hears, sees and speaks, etc., but these characteristics differ from the physical characteristics which are known. So the way it descends, ascends, hears, sees, stands and sits are different from the things which we know and understand. The Messenger (ﷺ) has told us that the *rooḥ* will be taken up to the highest heavens and then returned to the grave in an instant. And he has told us that it will be blessed or tormented in the grave; undoubtedly this blessing will be different from that which we know and understand.

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[5] *Sharḥ al-'Aqeedah aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah*, p. 444

[6] Narrated by Bukhari in *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, and by Abu Dawood and Al-Ḥaakim.

[7] *Risaalat al-'Aql war-Rooḥ, Majmoo'at ar-Rasaa'il al-Muneeriyyah*, 2/37

3 - The Soul is Separate from the Body

"A group of the scholars of *kalaam* and followers of *bid'ah* and innovations, from among the *Jahamiyyah* and *Mu'tazilah*, narrated that the *rooḥ* is part of the body, or one of its attributes. For example, some of them said that it is the breath or air that moves in the body. Others said that it is the life, or the mood, or the body itself."[8]

"The waffling philosophers admit that the *nafs* remains when it has departed from the body, but they describe it with false attributes. They claim that when it leaves the body, it becomes 'reason', and in their view reason is something that is separate from matter and all that has to do with matter. In their view, matter means the body, and reason is an independent entity which cannot be described as moving or stationary, and which does not change at all from one situation to another."[9]

Both of these groups were very confused in what they said about the *rooḥ*. Many of the scholars of *kalaam* and followers of reprehensible *bid'ah*, who said that the *rooḥ* is the life, or mood, or the body itself, also denied the torment of the grave and said that there is no *rooḥ* which is blessed or tormented after death in *Al-Barzakh*. Thus, they rejected the texts which prove that.

The philosophers who claimed that when the soul leaves the body it becomes reason said: "When it leaves the body, it does not change. It is not subject to any alteration with regard to knowledge or imagination, hearing or seeing, will, joy or happiness, or anything else that is subject to change. In their view, it remains in one state for eternity, as they also claim is the case for reason and the *nafs*."[10]

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[8] *Majmoo' Fataawa* Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, 3/31; *Risaalat al-'Aql war-Rooḥ* by Ibn Taymiyah, see *Majmoo'at ar-Rasaa'il al-Muneeriyaah*, 2/21

[9] *Majmoo'at ar-Rasaa'il al-Muneeriyyah, Risaalat al-'Aql war-Rooḥ*, 2/21

[10] op. cit., 2/22

One group of philosophers ascribed to it attributes which belong to the One Who, as they say, is existing necessarily (i.e., Allah), but what they say are things that can only be attributed to that which cannot exist. They said that the *rooh* is neither inside nor outside the body, neither distinct from it nor integrated with it; it is neither moving nor stationary; it neither ascends nor descends; it is neither physical nor metaphorical.[11]

The reason why both these groups made this mistake is that they relied on their reason and the standards that they applied to research of a matter of the unseen. The first group denied that the soul exists independently of the body, which is a denial of the *mutawaatir* texts and a rejection of a well established matter of Islam. The waffling philosophers and those who followed their path blindly affirmed that the soul exists independently of the body, but "because this *rooh* is not of the same essence as the body and it is not formed of the same element or a combination of different elements, it is of another essence which is different from these physical elements."[12]

It was difficult for them to define or describe it, and their phrases and expressions failed to define it. But Allah, the Exalted, guided those who responded to Him and His Messenger, and believed in what He told them. They knew that "the *rooh* is an entity which is different in essence to this physical body; it is a sublime entity of light which is lightweight, alive and moving. It penetrates deeply into all parts of the body and flows in it like water in the roses or oil in the olives or fire in the coals. So long as this physical body is fit to interact with this subtle entity, this subtle entity remains interconnected with this physical body and gives it the ability to feel, move and want. When

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[11] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam*, 3/31

[12] op. cit., 3/32

this physical body becomes unfit, because of sickness etc., it is no longer able to be influenced by this subtle entity, then the *rooh* departs from the body and goes to join the world of the souls."[13]

Throughout this book we have quoted a great deal of evidence which proves that the soul is something which is independent of the body, such as the verses of the Qur'an:

﴿ٱللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى ٱلْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَٱلَّتِى لَمْ تَمُتْ فِى مَنَامِهَا ۖ فَيُمْسِكُ ٱلَّتِى قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَوْتَ ... ﴿٤٢﴾﴾

﴿It is Allah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death, and those that die not during their sleep. He keeps those [souls] for which He has ordained death...﴾ *(Qur'an 39: 42)*

﴿وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۙ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَٰرَهُمْ ... ﴿٥٠﴾﴾

﴿And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve [at death]; they smite their faces and their backs...﴾ *(Qur'an 8: 50)*

﴿...وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ بَاسِطُوٓا۟ أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمُ ﴿٩٣﴾﴾

﴿...the angels are stretching forth their hands [saying]:

[13] This is Ibn al-Qayyim's definition of the *rooh* as given in his book *ar-Rooh*. This is quoted from and attributed to him by As-Safaareeni in *Lawaami' al-Anwaar al-Bahiyyah*, 2/29. It is quoted verbatim by the commentator of *at-Tahaawiyyah*, but without attributing it to its source. See *Sharh at-Tahaawiyyah*, p. 433. After giving this definition, Ibn al-Qayyim said: "This is the correct view on this matter; any other view is not correct and all other opinions on this matter are false. This is what is indicated by the Qur'an and Sunnah, the consensus of the *Salaf* and the evidence of reason and common sense. He quoted 15 examples of evidence (*daleel*) and proved that the opinions of Ibn Seena, Ibn Hazm and their like about the soul were false.

'Deliver your souls!'﴿ *(Qur'an 6: 93)*

﴾كَلَّآ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ ٱلتَّرَاقِيَ ۝ وَقِيلَ مَنْۜ رَاقٍ ۝ وَظَنَّ أَنَّهُ ٱلْفِرَاقُ ۝ وَٱلْتَفَّتِ ٱلسَّاقُ بِٱلسَّاقِ ۝ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ ٱلْمَسَاقُ ۝﴿

﴾Nay, when [the soul] reaches to the collarbone [i.e. up to the throat in its exit], And it will be said: 'Who can cure him [and save him from death]?' And he [the dying person] will conclude that it was [the time] of parting [death]; And one leg will be joined with another leg [shrouded]. The drive will be on that Day to your Lord [Allah]!﴿ *(Qur'an 75: 26-30)*

﴾فَلَوْلَآ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ ٱلْحُلْقُومَ ۝ وَأَنتُمْ حِينَئِذٍ تَنظُرُونَ ۝﴿

﴾Then why do you not [intervene] when [the soul of a dying person] reaches the throat? And you at the moment are looking on.﴿ *(Qur'an 56: 83-84)*

That which is taken by the angels, reaches to the throat and the collarbone, and is driven, must necessarily be something which is other than the body.

And we have quoted the *aḥaadeeth* in which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) tells how the Angel of Death seizes the soul, and the angels put that soul in a shroud from Paradise or from Hell, according to whether the person has been good or evil; they take it on a journey up to the heavens, where the gates of heaven are opened if it was a righteous soul, and are closed against it if it was evil; then it is returned to the body, is questioned and then blessed or tormented. The souls of the martyrs are in the crops of green birds, and the souls of the believers are birds perching in the trees of Paradise. When the soul is taken, the eyes follow it... and other texts which, when taken as a whole, offer definitive proof that the soul or *rooḥ* is something other than the body,

and that it remains after it has departed from the body.

4 - The Seat of the *Rooḥ* in the Body

The *rooḥ* flows through every part of man's body. Ibn Taymiyah said: "The *rooḥ* does not reside in any particular part of the body, rather it flows throughout the body just like the life which is the characteristic of the entire body. If life is dependent on the *rooḥ*, then when the *rooḥ* is in the body it is alive, and when the soul departs, life is over."[14]

5 - The *Rooḥ* is Created

Some of the philosophers were of the view that the soul is not created, but instead it is (from) eternity and exists from eternity, although it is not part of the Divine essence. What they say about the *rooḥ* is the same as what they say about reason and the angels. They claimed that whoever followed the philosophers' view, no matter what religion they followed, said that the souls were angels.

Another group of heretics and misguided people from this ummah, from among the scholars of *kalaam*, Sufis and followers of innovation said that the *rooḥ* was part of the essence of Allah. These people, as Ibn Taymiyah says, are more evil in what they say than the first group. They divided man into two halves - half divine, i.e., the *rooḥ*, and half human, i.e., the body; half lord and half slave.[15]

The truth, from which no one should diverge, is that the *rooḥ* is something which is created and has a beginning. This is indicated by a number of things:

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[14] *Risaalah al-'Aql war-Rooḥ, Majmoo'at ar-Rasaa'il al-Muneeriyyah*, 2/47

[15] *Majmoo' Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam*, 4/222

(1) *Ijmaa'* (scholarly consensus):

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah says: "The human soul is created, according to the consensus of the ummah, its Imams and all the *Ahl as-Sunnah*. Many of the scholars of the Muslims narrated in their books that there is scholarly consensus that the *rooḥ* is a created entity, such as Muhammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazi, the famous Imam, who was the most knowledgeable of his time about issues in which there was scholarly consensus or dispute, or one of the most knowledgeable.

Abu Muhammad ibn Qutaybah said in *Kitaab al-Luqaṭ*, when he discussed the creation of the soul: the people (i.e., scholars) are unanimously agreed that Allah is the Creator of the body and the Originator of the soul.

Abu Isḥaaq ibn Shaaqilaa said, commenting on this issue: the *rooḥ* is one of the created things. Several groups of the greatest scholars and shaykhs discussed this matter, and they refuted those who claim that it is not created.

Al-Ḥaafiẓ Abu 'Abdullah ibn Mandah wrote a lengthy book about that, called *ar-Rooḥ wan-Nafs*, in which he quoted a large number of *aḥaadeeth* and reports. He was preceded by Imam Muhammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazi and others, and by Shaykh Abu Ya'qoob al-Kharraaz, Abu Ya'qoob an-Nahrjoori, al-Qaaḍi Abu Ya'laa, and others. This is stated by the greatest Imams, who severely denounced those who said that concerning 'Eesa ibn Maryam (i.e., that his soul was not created) and denounced even more severely those who said that concerning anyone else, as is mentioned by Aḥmad in his book, *ar-Radd 'ala az-Zanaadiqah wal-Jahamiyyah*.[16]

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[16] *Majmoo' Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam*, 4/216

(2) The Qur'an and Sunnah

There is a great deal of evidence in the Qur'an and Sunnah to indicate that the soul is created. For example, Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿... ٱللَّهُ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ... ﴿١٦﴾﴾

﴿...Allah is the Creator of all things...﴾

(Qur'an 13: 16; 39: 62)

The commentator on aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah said, after quoting this verse as evidence, "This is general in meaning, and is not specific in any sense."[17]

And Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿هَلْ أَتَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْإِنسَٰنِ حِينٌ مِّنَ ٱلدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْـًٔا مَّذْكُورًا ﴿١﴾﴾

﴿Has there not been over man a period of time, when he was not a thing worth mentioning?﴾ *(Qur'an 76: 1)*

And Allah (ﷻ) said to Zakariya:

﴿... وَقَدْ خَلَقْتُكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَمْ تَكُ شَيْـًٔا ﴿٩﴾﴾

﴿...Certainly I have created you before, when you had been nothing!﴾ *(Qur'an 19: 9)*

Insaan (man) is a word which refers to the body of man and his soul; when Allah spoke to Zakariya, He was referring to his body and his soul. Ibn Taymiyah said: "*Insaan* (man) is an expression which refers to both the body and the soul together; indeed, it applies more to the soul than to the body. The body is only a vehicle for the soul, as Abu ad-Dardaa' said, 'My body is my vehicle. If I treat it gently, it will convey me and if I do not treat it gently, it will not convey me.' It is

[17] *Sharḥ aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah*, p. 442

narrated by Ibn Mandah and others that Ibn 'Abbaas said, "The dispute among created beings on the Day of Judgement will continue until the soul and the body dispute. The soul will say to the body, "You did evil things," and the body will say to the soul, "You told me to do that" Then Allah will send an angel to judge between them. He will say, "You two are like a paralyzed man and a blind man who entered a garden. The paralyzed man saw fruits hanging there and said to the blind man, 'I can see fruit but I cannot reach it.' The blind man said, 'I can reach it but I cannot see it.' The paralyzed man said, 'Come and lift me up so that I can pick it.' So he lifted him up so that he could pick it; he carried him and he told him where he wanted him to go so that he could pick the fruit." The angel will say, "So which of them should be punished?" They will say, "Both of them." He will say, "The same applies to you two."'"[18]

(3) We have mentioned in this book many texts in which the Prophet (ﷺ) says that the souls will be taken and placed in a shroud and aromatics for embalming which will be brought by the angels; it will be taken up, and will be blessed or tormented; that the soul is seized during sleep and sent back. All of these are things which happen to something that is created.

(4) If the soul were not something that is created and subjugated, it would not have affirmed the Lordship of Allah. Allah said to the souls when He took the covenant from His slaves when they had been created and before they were conceived, "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Indeed You are." This is what Allah (ﷻ) says in the *aayah*:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنۢ بَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ مِن ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ ... ﴿١٧٢﴾﴾

[18] *Majmoo' Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam*, 4/222

> ﴾And [remember] when your Lord brought forth from the Children of Adam, from their loins, their seed [or from Adam's loin his offspring] and made them testify as to themselves [saying]: 'Am I not your Lord?' They said: 'Yes!'...﴿ *(Qur'an 7: 172)*

So long as He is their Lord, then they are subjugated and created.

(5) If the soul were not created, then the Christians would not be to blame for worshipping 'Eesa (Jesus) or for saying that he is the son of God or that he is God.

(6) If the soul were not created, then it would not enter Hell or be punished, it would not be kept away from Allah, it would not dwell in the body. it would not be seized by the Angel of Death. It would not be an entity that may be described. it would not be brought to account or punished, it would not worship or fear Allah, it would not have hope. And the souls of the believers would not be shining whilst the souls of the *kuffaar* are as black as coal.[19]

6 - The Specious Arguments of those who Claim that the Soul is not Created

Those who say that the soul is not created quote as evidence verses such as the following:

﴿وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلرُّوحِ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّى ... ﴿٨٥﴾﴾

> ﴾They ask you concerning the Spirit [of inspiration]. Say: 'The Spirit [comes] by command of my Lord [*min amri Rabbi*]...﴿ *(Qur'an 17: 85* - Yusuf 'Ali's translation)

[19] The last three points were cited as evidence by Abu Sa'eed al-Kharraaz, one of the greatest *shaykhs* and *aaimmah*, who was a contemporary of al-Junayd as quoted from him by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah. See *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 4/220

The response to this may be made by noting the following:

One: That the *rooḥ* referred to here is not the human *rooḥ*; rather it is the name of an angel, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا ... ﴿٣٨﴾﴾

﴾The Day that *Ar-Rooḥ* [Jibreel (Gabriel) or another angel] and the angels will stand forth in rows...﴿

(Qur'an 78: 38)

﴿تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ ... ﴿٤﴾﴾

﴾The angels and the *Rooḥ* [Jibreel (Gabriel)] ascend to Him...﴿ *(Qur'an 70: 4)*

﴿تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِم ... ﴿٤﴾﴾

﴾Therein descend the angels and the *Rooḥ* [Jibreel (Gabriel)] by Allah's permission...﴿ *(Qur'an 97: 4)*

This is the well known interpretation of these verses among the Imams of the *salaf.*

Two: If we say that what is meant here is the human *rooḥ* - as was the view of a group of Imams of the *salaf* concerning this verse - this still does not indicate that the *rooḥ* is not created or that it is part of the essence of Allah as it may be said that this piece of cloth is part of this garment. Rather what is meant is that it is attributed to Allah because it was formed by His command, or because it came into being by His word. The word *amr* in the Qur'an sometimes means the infinitive, sometimes the object i.e., what is commanded or instructed, as when Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿أَتَىٰ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوهُ ... ﴿١﴾﴾

﴾The Event [*amr*] [the Hour or the punishment of

> disbelievers and polytheists or the Islamic laws or commandments] ordained by Allah will come to pass, so seek not to hasten it...❵ *(Qur'an 16: 1)*

i.e., what is commanded by Allah (ﷻ). It may also be noted that the word *min* (lit. from) in the phrase ❴is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord (*min amri Rabbi* - lit. from the matter or command of my Lord)❵' refers to the beginning of something or the starting-point. It is known that the word *min* is sometimes used to refer to the origin or type of a thing ('one of the things'), as when people say '*baab min ḥadeed* (a gate of iron)', or it may be used to refer to a starting point, '*kharajtu min Makkah* (I set out from Makkah).' So the phrase '*min amri Rabbi*' does not mean that the *rooḥ* is part of the command (*amr*) or is of the same essence, rather it refers to the starting-point because it was formed by His command (*amr*) and was created by Him. This is the meaning of the answer given by Imam Aḥmad concerning the phrase 'a *rooḥ* created by Him (*rooḥ minhu*, lit. from Him)' [describing 'Eesa (Jesus)], when he said: "When Allah, the Exalted, said, 'A *rooḥ* created by Him', He means created by His command. This is like the *aayah*:

﴿وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ ... ﴿١٣﴾﴾

> ❴And has subjected to you all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth; it is all as a favour and kindness from Him [*minhu*]...❵ *(Qur'an 45: 13)*

And a similar phrase is to be found in the *aayah*:

﴿وَمَا بِكُم مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ ٱللَّهِ ... ﴿٥٣﴾﴾

> ❴And whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allah [min Allah]...❵ *(Qur'an 16: 53)*

The things that are subjected to man and the blessings are from Allah, but they are not part of His essence; rather they come from Him. So we cannot say that the phrase describing 'Eesa (Jesus), "*roohun minhu*" means that he is a part of His essence.[20]

The second specious argument: Allah (ﷻ) said concerning Adam:

﴿... وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي ... ﴾

﴿...and breathed into him [Adam] the soul which I created for him [*min roohi* lit. from My soul]...﴾ *(Qur'an 15: 29)*

And He said concerning 'Eesa (Jesus):

﴿... فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِن رُّوحِنَا ... ﴾

﴿...We breathed into [the sleeves of] her [shirt or garment] through Our *Rooh* - [Jibreel (Gabriel)] [*min roohina* lit. from Our soul]...﴾ *(Qur'an 21: 91)*

They said, Allah (ﷻ) mentioned the *rooh* in a genitive construction (*idaafah*) relating to Himself. This specious argument was addressed by the commentator on at-Tahaawiyyah who said: "It should be noted that the use of the genitive construction with reference to Allah may be one of two types. If it mentions attributes that cannot exist by themselves, such as knowledge, power, speech, hearing or seeing, this is ascribing an attribute to One Who bears that attribute. So His knowledge, speech, power and life are attributes which belong to Him. The same is true of His Face and Hand, may He be glorified.

The second type is when distinct entities are mentioned in a genitive construction referring to Allah, such as His House, she-camel, Messenger and *rooh*, as in the verses:

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[20] For more detail on this topic, see *Majmoo' Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam*, 4/226-235

﴿... نَاقَةَ ٱللَّهِ وَسُقْيَٰهَا ﴾

﴾...That is the she-camel of Allah! [Do not harm it] and bar it not from having its drink!﴿ *(Qur'an 91: 13)*

﴿تَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ ٱلْفُرْقَانَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِۦ ... ﴾

﴾Blessed be He Who sent down the criterion [of right and wrong, i.e. this Qur'an] to His slave...﴿ *(Qur'an 25: 1)*

﴿... وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِىَ لِلطَّآئِفِينَ ﴾

﴾...and sanctify My House for those who circumambulate it.﴿ *(Qur'an 22: 26)*

In these verses, created things are mentioned in a genitive construction referring to their Creator, but here the construction implies being singled out and honoured."[21]

7 - Different Kinds of *Nafs*

Allah (ﷻ) tells us that there are three different kinds of *nafs*:

The *nafs* which is inclined to evil (the tempting self):

﴿إِنَّ ٱلنَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌۢ بِٱلسُّوٓءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّىٓ ... ﴾

﴾Verily, the [human] self [*nafs*] is inclined to evil, except when my Lord bestows His Mercy [upon whom He wills]...﴿ *(Qur'an 12: 53)*

The *nafs* which is self-reproaching (conscience):

﴿وَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِٱلنَّفْسِ ٱللَّوَّامَةِ ﴾

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[21] *Sharḥ aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah*, p. 442. See *Risaalat ar-Rooḥ*, *Majmoo'at ar-Rasaa'il al-Muneeriyyah*, 2/38

﴿And I swear by the self-reproaching person [*nafs*] [a believer].﴾ *(Qur'an 75: 2)*

And the *nafs* which is in (complete) rest and satisfaction (the soul of a believer):

﴿يَٰٓأَيَّتُهَا ٱلنَّفْسُ ٱلْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ۝٢٧ ٱرْجِعِىٓ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ۝٢٨ فَٱدْخُلِى فِى عِبَٰدِى ۝٢٩ وَٱدْخُلِى جَنَّتِى ۝٣٠﴾

﴿[It will be said to the pious - believers of Islamic Monotheism]: 'O' [you] the one [*nafs*] in [complete] rest and satisfaction! Come back to your Lord, well-pleased [yourself] and well-pleasing [unto Him]! Enter you then among My [honoured] slaves, And enter you My Paradise!'﴾ *(Qur'an 89: 27-30)*

This does not mean that each person has three souls; what it means is that these are attributes and conditions that may apply to one soul. If a soul is controlled by its whims and desires so that it commits sin and is disobedient, then it is the soul that is inclined to evil. The self-reproaching soul is that which sins then repents. It is called self-reproaching because it blames the person for his sin, and because it wavers between doing good and evil. And the soul in (complete) rest and satisfaction is the soul which loves and desires goodness and good deeds, and it hates and detests evil and evil deeds, and that has become its nature, habit and characteristic.[22]

The commentator on aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah said, after mentioning the different kinds of *nafs*: "In fact they are one *nafs* which has different attributes. It is inclined to evil, but if it is influenced by faith, it becomes self-reproaching, so it may commit sin but then it blames itself and alternates between doing and not doing. If faith becomes

[22] See *Risaalat al-'Aql war-Rooḥ* by Ibn Taymiyah, *Majmoo'at ar-Rasaa'il al-Muneeriyyah*, 2/41

strong, it becomes the soul in (complete) rest and satisfaction."[23]

8 - Do Souls Die?

Ibn Taymiyah says: "Souls are no doubt created, but they do not cease to exist. Their death occurs when they are separated from the body, and at the second Trumpet-blast the souls will return to the bodies."[24] The commentator on aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah also discussed this matter, and said: "The people differed as to whether the soul dies or not. One group said, it dies because it is a *nafs*, and every *nafs* will taste death... If the angels will die, then it is more appropriate that the human soul will die too. Others said that the souls will not die, because they were created to abide forever; what dies is the body. They said, this is proven by the *aḥaadeeth* which indicate that the souls will be blessed or tormented after they depart (from the bodies), until Allah returns them to their bodies. The correct view is to say that the death of the *nafs* is when it is separated from its body and departs from it. If this is what is meant by its death, then it will taste death. But if it is meant that it will cease to exist altogether, then it does not die in this sense, rather it will abide after it has been created, either in bliss or in torment... Allah tells us that the people of Paradise

﴿لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا الْمَوْتَ إِلَّا الْمَوْتَةَ الْأُولَىٰ ... ﴾

﴾will never taste death therein except the first death [of this world]...﴿ *(Qur'an 44: 56)*

and that is the death which means the separation of the soul from the body."[25]

[23] *Sharḥ aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah*, p. 445

[24] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 4/279

[25] *Sharḥ aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah*, p. 446

9 - The Abode of the *Rooḥ* in *Al-Barzakh*

In *Al-Barzakh*, people's souls will be at different levels. We have studied the texts which were narrated concerning that, and discovered that they may be divided into the following categories:

(1) The souls of the prophets

These will be in the best dwelling places in the highest part of *'Illiyyeen* (the Highest Places), with the highest companions. 'Aa'ishah heard the Messenger (ﷺ), in the last moments of his life, saying, "O Allah, (with) the Highest Companions."[26]

(2) The souls of the martyrs

They are alive with their Lord, and they have provision. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَمْوَٰتًۢا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَآءٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ١٦٩﴾

﴾Think not of those as dead who are killed in the way of Allah. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision.﴿ *(Qur'an 3: 169)*

Masrooq asked 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood about this *aayah*, and he said, "We asked about that, and he said, 'Their souls are in the crops of green birds which have lamps hanging from the Throne. They roam in Paradise wherever they wish, then they come back to those lamps.'" This is narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*.[27] This is the case for some of the souls of the martyrs, not for all of the martyrs,

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[26] Bukhari, *Kitaab ar-Riqaaq, Baab man aḥabba Liqaa' Allah*; *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 11/357

[27] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 2/351

because some of them may be detained from entering Paradise by debts that they have left behind. It is narrated in *al-Musnad* from 'Abdullah ibn Jaḥsh that a man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, what will I have if I am killed for the sake of Allah?" He said, "Paradise." When he went away, he said, 'Except debt' - Jibreel (Gabriel) whispered to me just now."[28]

(3) The souls of the righteous believers

These (souls) will be birds perching in the trees of Paradise. According to the hadith narrated by 'Abd ar-Raḥmaan ibn Ka'b ibn Maalik (ﷺ), the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "The soul of the Muslim is a bird perching in the trees of Paradise, until Allah returns it to his body on the Day of Resurrection." This is narrated by Aḥmad.[29]

The difference between the souls of the believers and the souls of the martyrs is that the souls of the martyrs are in the crops of green birds which wander about in the gardens of Paradise and return to lamps hanging from the Throne, whereas the souls of the believers are inside birds which hang from the fruits of Paradise but they do not wander around in it. The idea that the souls of the believers are birds which perch in the trees of Paradise does not contradict the other hadith which is narrated by Abu Hurayrah from the Messenger (ﷺ), in which it says that the angels seize the soul of the believing slave

[28] Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani said in his commentary on *Sharḥ aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah*, p. 445, it is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. We have quoted above many *aḥaadeeth* which say similar things.

[29] Narrated by Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani in *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 2/730, hadith no. 995. He said: it is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of the two *shaykhs* (Bukhari and Muslim). Also narrated by Ibn Maajah in his *Sunan*, Maalik in *al-Muw'aṭṭa'* and Nasaa'i with the wording, "The souls of the believers are in the crops of green birds, perching in the trees of Paradise."

and take it up to the heavens, and the angels say, "How good is the soul which you have brought from the earth," then they bring it to meet the souls of the believers, and they rejoice over it more than anyone of you does when an absent loved one returns. They ask him, "What happened to So and so? What happened to So and so?" But they (the angels) say, "Leave him alone, for he was facing the distress of the world." He says, "But he died, did he not come to meet you?" Then they say, "He has gone to his home in *Al-Haawiyah* (the pit of Hell)."[30] So the soul of the believer meets the souls of other believers in Paradise.

(4) The souls of the sinners

We have quoted above the texts which describe the torment that the sinners will face. For example, those who told lies which spread far and wide will be tormented by means of iron hooks which will be inserted into the corners of their mouths, then their faces will be torn to the back of their necks. Those who slept and neglected the obligatory prayers will have their heads smashed with rocks. Men and women who committed adultery will be tormented in a hole which resembles a kind of oven which is narrow at the top and wide at the bottom, under which fire is kindled. Those who consumed *ribaa* will be swimming in a river of blood, on the bank of which will be one who throws stones into their mouths.[31] We have also quoted the *ahaadeeth* about the torment of those who do not cleanse themselves of urine, those who go about spreading slander among the people, those who conceal for themselves shares from the war-booty by stealth before it is distributed, and so on.

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[30] Nasaa'i, *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Baab ma yalqa al-Mu'min min al-Karaamah 'inda Khurooj nafsihi*, 4/8

[31] We have quoted this hadith in full above. The hadith is narrated by Bukhari in his *Saheeh*.

(5) The souls of the *kuffaar*

According to the hadith of Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) narrated by Nasaa'i, after describing the believer when he reaches his abode in Paradise, he mentions the state of the *kaafir* and what happens to him at the moment of death. After his soul is taken, "There emanates from it the foulest stench, until he is brought to the gates of the earth, and they say, 'How foul is this stench,' until they bring him to meet the souls of other *kuffaar*."[32]

10 - Problems and Answers

It may be said: you have quoted texts which indicate that the souls will be restored to the bodies, then it may be asked, after that the believer will be blessed and the *kaafir* tormented, so how can you say that the souls of the believers will be in Paradise and the souls of the *kuffaar* in Hell?

Ibn Ḥazm tried to describe as *ḍa'eef* (weak) the *aḥaadeeth* which mention the return of the soul to the body in the grave, but these *aḥaadeeth* are not weak. The hadith of Zaadaan from al-Baraa' which Ibn Ḥazm described as *ḍa'eef* is a *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith. There are many *ṣaḥeeḥ mutawaatir aḥaadeeth* which indicate that the soul will be returned to the body, as Ibn Taymiyah said.[33] Reconciling the *aḥaadeeth*, Ibn Taymiyah said: "Even though the souls of the believers are in Paradise, they may be returned to their bodies, just as they may be in their bodies but they ascend to the heavens when a person is asleep. There are general *aḥaadeeth* which state that they are in Paradise, as was noted by Aḥmad and other scholars, and they quoted as evidence the general *aḥaadeeth* and the *aḥaadeeth* which speak

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[32] Nasaa'i, *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Baab ma yalqa al-mu'min min al-Karaamah 'inda khurooj nafsihi*, 4/8

[33] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 5/446

specifically about sleep, and others."[34] Then he mentioned some of these *aḥaadeeth* which we have quoted above, and he quoted the hadith of Abu Hurayrah which was narrated by Ibn Ḥibbaan and others, in which it is mentioned that the believer, after being questioned, will be shown his place in Paradise, and the place in Hell which would have been his if he has been a *kaafir*. He said, "Then his grave will be expanded for him by seventy cubits and will be illuminated for him, and his body will be put back as it was. His soul will be placed in *nasm aṭ-ṭeeb*, which is a bird that perches in the trees of Paradise." According to another version, "They are birds which perch in the trees of Paradise." According to another version, "Then his body will be put back as it was."[35] So the soul, as is indicated by the hadith, will return to the body after its journey to the heavens, then it will be questioned, then it will become a bird which perches in the trees of Paradise, until all people are resurrected. Even though it is in Paradise, it will still be connected in some way to the body, as is the case when a person is asleep, when his soul wanders about in the kingdoms of heaven and earth, although it is still connected to the body. This understanding is based on knowing that the soul is different from the body and from what is known of the creation of this world. Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said, after mentioning that the abode of believing souls is Paradise, "At the same time, they are connected to the bodies whenever Allah wills, and at that instant they are like the angels who descend to the earth, or like the rays of light which shine on the earth, or like the sleeper who awakes suddenly."[36]

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[34] op. cit., 5/447

[35] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 5/448

[36] *Ibid*, 24/365

11 - Does the Torment in *Al-Barzakh* Affect the Soul, the Body or Both?

The Muslim sects are of different views concerning this matter.

(1) The view of *Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* is that the soul is distinct from the body but is connected to it. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said: "The torment and the blessing happen to both the soul and the body, according to the consensus of *Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*. The soul is blessed or tormented separately from the body, and is tormented in connection with the body, and the body is connected to it. So the blessing and torment happen to them both together in this situation, and it happens to the soul separately from the body."

(2) Many scholars of *kalaam*, from among the *Mu'tazilah* and others, deny the blessing or torment in *al-Barzakh* altogether. The reason is that they deny the existence of a soul that is independent of the body. In their view, the soul is life, and the soul does not remain after death,[37] so there is no blessing and no torment until Allah resurrects His slaves. This was the view expressed by some of the *Mu'tazilah* and Ash'aris, such as al-Qaaḍi Abu Bakr. This is undoubtedly a false view which was opposed by Abul-Ma'aali al-Juwayni. More than one of the *Ahl as-Sunnah* narrated that there is consensus that the soul remains after it leaves the body and that it is blessed or tormented.

(3) The philosophers who thought that the blessing and torment happen only to the soul, and that the body is not blessed or tormented.[38] This view was expressed by Ibn Maysarah and Ibn Ḥazm among the *Ahl as-Sunnah*.

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[37] Although they denied the torment of the grave, they still believed in the physical resurrection of bodies. (Author)

[38] They believe that the torment and blessing happen to the soul after it leaves the body, but they deny the resurrection

(4) Some of the scholars of *kalaam* said that what is blessed or tormented in the grave is the body only. This view was expressed by a group among the scholars of hadith, including Ibn al-Zaa'ooni.[39]

12 - Does a Person Know Anything About What is Happening in this World After He Dies?

It is narrated in the *ṣaḥeeḥ aḥaadeeth* that the deceased can hear the sound of his companions' footsteps after they have put him in his grave. It is narrated from Anas ibn Maalik that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "When a person is placed in his grave and his companions depart from him, he surely hears the sound of their footsteps..."[40]

Three days after the battle of Badr, the Messenger (ﷺ) stood over the *mushrikeen* who had been killed at the battle and addressed some of them by name. He said, "O' Abu Jahl ibn Hishaam, O' Umayyah ibn Khalaf, O' 'Utbah ibn Rabee'ah, O' Shaybah ibn Rabee'ah, have you not found what your Lord promised to be true? For I have found what my Lord promised me to be true." 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭaab said: "O' Messenger of Allah, how could they hear, how could they respond, when they are rotting corpses?" He said,

> "By the One in Whose hand is my soul, you do not hear what I say any better than they do, but they cannot reply." Then he commanded that they be dragged away and thrown into the well of Badr.[41]

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[39] *Majmoo' Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah*, 4/262,282

[40] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Jannah, Baab 'arḍ maq'ad al-mayit fil-Jannah aw an-Naar 'alayhi*, 4/2203, hadith no. 2874

[41] Bukhari in *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Baab ma jaa' fi 'adhaab al-qabr*. Also in *Kitaab al-Jannah, Baab 'arḍ maq'ad al-mayit fil-Jannah aw an-Naar 'alayhi*, 4/2200, hadith no. 2870. Also Abu Dawood and Nasaa'i; see *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 11/180

Ibn Taymiyah quoted a number of *ahaadeeth* which indicate that the dead can hear, then he said: "These and similar texts show that the dead can hear the speech of the living in general, but it does not mean that they can hear them all the time. They may hear at some times and not at others, as is the case with the living, who sometimes hears what is being said to him, and sometimes he does not hear it for some reason."[42] Ibn Taymiyah dealt with the issue raised by the one who said, "Allah has stated that the dead do not hear, when He said,

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تُسْمِعُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ... ﴾

﴾Verily, you cannot make the dead to hear...﴿

(Qur'an 27: 80)

so how can you claim that the dead can hear?" Ibn Taymiyah said: "That is the hearing of comprehension, which does not lead to reward or punishment; it is not the hearing referred to in the *aayah*: ﴾Verily, you cannot make the dead to hear...﴿ *(Qur'an 27: 80)*

What is meant in this *aayah* (verse) is the hearing of acceptance, when one hears and obeys. Allah likened the *kaafir* to the dead who does not respond to the one who calls him, and to the animals who hear the voice but do not understand the meaning. Although the dead can hear the speech and understand the meaning, they cannot respond to the one who is calling them and they cannot heed the commands or prohibitions, so they do not benefit from them. Similarly, the *kaafir* does not benefit from the commands and prohibitions, even though he hears what is said and understands the meanings. As Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَوْ عَلِمَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لَّأَسْمَعَهُمْ ... ﴾

[42] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 5/364

﴾Had Allah known of any good in them, He would indeed have made them listen...﴿ *(Qur'an 8: 23).*"[43]

There are also texts which indicate that the dead speaks along with hearing. The *Munkar* and *Nakeer* question the deceased, and the believer is helped to answer correctly, whilst the *kaafir* and hypocrite are prevented from giving the right answers. The dead may also speak at other times apart from the questioning of *Munkar* and *Nakeer*. All of that is different from speech as it is known to the people of this world, for what is questioned and what responds is the soul. It is the soul which answers, sits up and is blessed or tormented, although it is connected in some way to the body. We have mentioned above that some people have heard the speech of the dead, and that the Messenger (ﷺ) used to hear that a great deal.

[43] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 5/364

SECTION TWO

THE SIGNS OF THE HOUR

CHAPTER ONE
THE TIME OF THE HOUR

1 - The Hour Has to Come, there is no Doubt

Belief in the Day of Resurrection is one of the basic principles of faith, without which there is no true faith.

﴿ ۞ لَّيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ ... ﴿١٧٧﴾ ﴾

﴿It is not *Al-Birr* [piety], that you turn your faces towards east and [or] west [in prayers]; but *Al-Birr* is [the quality of] the one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets...﴾ *(Qur'an 2: 177)*

﴿...وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ ۚ وَالْمُقِيمِينَ الصَّلَاةَ ۚ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أُولَٰئِكَ سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٦٢﴾ ﴾

﴿...and the believers, believe in what has been sent down to you [Muhammad] and what was sent down before you; and those who perform *Aṣ-Ṣalaah* [*Iqaamat-aṣ-Ṣalaah*], and give *Zakaah* and believe in Allah and in the Last Day, it is they to whom We shall give a great reward.﴾ *(Qur'an 4: 162)*

The Qur'an gives different types of metaphors to reinforce in people's hearts the idea that the Hour will come:

﴿... يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُم بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾

﴾...He manages and regulates all affairs; He explains the *Aayaat* [proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.] in detail, that you may believe with certainty in the Meeting with your Lord.﴿ *(Qur'an 13: 2)*

In some places He speaks of it as something which is going to happen:

﴿ٱللَّهُ يَبْدَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١﴾﴾

﴾Allah [Alone] originates the creation, then He will repeat it, then to Him you will be returned.﴿ *(Qur'an 30: 11)*

﴿...وَيَوْمَ يُرْجَعُونَ إِلَيْهِ فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا۟ ... ﴿٦٤﴾﴾

﴾...and [He knows] the Day when they will be brought back to Him, then He will inform them of what they did...﴿ *(Qur'an 24: 64)*

Sometimes its coming is affirmed by the use of the word "*inna*" (verily, indeed):

﴿إِنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ ءَاتِيَةٌ ... ﴿١٥﴾﴾

﴾Verily [*inna*], the Hour is coming...﴿

(Qur'an 20: 15)

Sometimes it is affirmed by the use of "*inna*" and the particle *laam* (used for emphasis):

﴿... وَإِنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ لَءَاتِيَةٌ فَٱصْفَحِ ٱلصَّفْحَ ٱلْجَمِيلَ ﴿٨٥﴾﴾

﴾...and the Hour is surely, coming, [*la aatiyah*], so overlook [O' Muhammad] their faults with gracious forgiveness.﴿ *(Qur'an 15: 85)*

﴿...فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ ٱللَّهِ لَءَاتٍ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ۝٥﴾

﴾...then Allah's Term is surely coming [*la aatin*], and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.﴿ *(Qur'an 29: 5)*

In some places it is stated that there is no doubt concerning its coming:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ لَءَاتِيَةٌ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهَا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝٥٩﴾

﴾Verily, the Hour [Day of Judgement] is surely coming, there is no doubt about it, yet most men believe not.﴿ *(Qur'an 40: 59)*

In some verses, Allah swears that the Hour is indeed coming. Sometimes He swears by Himself:

﴿ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ... ۝٨٧﴾

﴾Allah! *Laa ilaaha illa Huwa* [none has the right to be worshipped but He]. Surely, He will gather you together on the Day of Resurrection about which there is no doubt...﴿ *(Qur'an 4: 87)*

Sometimes He swears by mighty things among His creation:

﴿وَٱلذَّٰرِيَٰتِ ذَرْوًا ۝١ فَٱلْحَٰمِلَٰتِ وِقْرًا ۝٢ فَٱلْجَٰرِيَٰتِ يُسْرًا ۝٣ فَٱلْمُقَسِّمَٰتِ أَمْرًا ۝٤ إِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَصَادِقٌ ۝٥ وَإِنَّ ٱلدِّينَ لَوَٰقِعٌ ۝٦﴾

﴾By [the winds] that scatter dust; And [the clouds] that bear heavy weight of water; And [the ships] that float with ease and gentleness; And those [angels] who distribute [provisions, rain, and other blessings] by [Allah's] Command, Verily, that which you are promised [i.e. Resurrection in the Hereafter and receiving the

reward or punishment of good or bad deeds] is surely true. And verily, the Recompense is sure to happen.﴿

(Qur'an 51: 1-6)

﴿وَالطُّورِ ﴿١﴾ وَكِتَابٍ مَّسْطُورٍ ﴿٢﴾ فِي رَقٍّ مَّنشُورٍ ﴿٣﴾ وَالْبَيْتِ الْمَعْمُورِ ﴿٤﴾ وَالسَّقْفِ الْمَرْفُوعِ ﴿٥﴾ وَالْبَحْرِ الْمَسْجُورِ ﴿٦﴾ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ ﴿٧﴾ مَّا لَهُ مِن دَافِعٍ ﴿٨﴾﴾

﴾By the *Toor* [Mount] And by the Book Inscribed In parchment unrolled. And by *Al-Bayt al-Ma'moor* [the house over the heavens parallel to the Ka'bah at Makkah, continuously visited by the angels]. And by the roof raised high [i.e. the heaven]. And by the sea kept filled [or it will be fire kindled on the Day of Resurrection]. Verily, the Torment of your Lord will surely come to pass. There is none that can avert it.﴿

(Qur'an 52: 1-8)

In some verses, Allah (ﷻ) commands His Messenger, when disputing (with the *kuffaar*) to swear by His Lord, affirming that it will indeed come to pass:

﴿۞ وَيَسْتَنۢبِـُٔونَكَ أَحَقٌّ هُوَ ۖ قُلْ إِي وَرَبِّيٓ إِنَّهُۥ لَحَقٌّ ۖ وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾﴾

﴾And they ask you [O' Muhammad] to inform them [saying]: 'Is it true [i.e. the torment and the establishment of the Hour - the Day of Resurrection]?' Say: 'Yes! By my Lord! It is the very truth! and you cannot escape it!'﴿

(Qur'an 10: 53)

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَأْتِينَا السَّاعَةُ ۖ قُلْ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي لَتَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ ... ﴿٣﴾﴾

﴾Those who disbelieve say: "The Hour will not come to us." Say: "Yes, by my Lord, it will come to you"...﴿

(Qur'an 34: 3)

And in some verses, Allah (ﷻ) says that it is true:

﴿... إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا ... ﴿٣٣﴾﴾

﴾...Verily, the Promise of Allah is true, let not then this [worldly] present life deceive you...﴿ *(Qur'an 31: 33)*

Whoever studies the ways in which the Qur'an emphasizes that this is going to happen, will find that it does so in many ways, a few of which we have mentioned here.[1]

2 - The Hour is Close at Hand

The Lord of Glory announced to His slaves in His Book which He revealed fourteen centuries ago that the Hour had drawn nigh and that the time for it to happen had arrived.

﴿ٱقْتَرَبَتِ ٱلسَّاعَةُ وَٱنشَقَّ ٱلْقَمَرُ ﴿١﴾﴾

﴾The Hour has drawn near, and the moon has been cleft asunder.﴿ *(Qur'an 54: 1)*

The cleaving of the moon was one of the signs which indicate that the Hour is at hand. Because the Hour is close at hand, the Qur'an speaks of it as if it is already here:

﴿أَتَىٰٓ أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوهُ... ﴿١﴾﴾

﴾The Event [the Hour or the punishment of disbelievers and polytheists or the Islamic laws or commandments] ordained by Allah will come to pass[2], so seek not to

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[1] One *aayah* may combine more than one method. Anyone who studies the verses which we have quoted here will see that clearly. (Author)

[2] The verb ata in this *aayah*, translated here as "will come to pass" is in the past tense, which in Arabic indicates that it has already come, as confirmation of its closeness. (Translator)

hasten it...﴿ *(Qur'an 16: 1)*

If people believed firmly and with understanding in what Allah has revealed, the matter of the Hereafter would become very serious and terrifying, and would dominate their thoughts completely. But strangely enough, people do not take this matter seriously even though danger is so very close. But they are negligent of the terror that has almost come upon them and has nearly encompassed them.

﴿ٱقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِى غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ۝ مَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن ذِكْرٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِم مُّحْدَثٍ إِلَّا ٱسْتَمَعُوهُ وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ۝ لَاهِيَةً قُلُوبُهُمْ ... ۝﴾

﴾Draws near for mankind their reckoning, while they turn away in heedlessness. Comes not unto them an admonition [a chapter of the Qur'an] from their Lord as a recent revelation but they listen to it while they play. With their hearts occupied [with evil things]...﴿

(Qur'an 21:1-3)

Hence the Qur'an frequently warns man of the Hour and commands him to be prepared for it. It describes it as being "tomorrow", which means the day that follows the day one is passing his time.

﴿... وَلْتَنظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ... ۝﴾

﴾...And let every person look to what he has sent forth for the morrow...﴿ *(Qur'an 59: 18)*

It may be said, how can it be near when news of it was given about one thousand and four hundred years ago? The answer is that it is close in the knowledge and estimation of Allah, even though by human standards it may seem far off.

﴿إِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَهُ بَعِيدًا ۝٦ وَنَرَاهُ قَرِيبًا ۝٧﴾

﴾Verily, they see it [the torment] afar off. But We see it [quite] near.﴿ *(Qur'an 70: 6-7)*

What should be noted is that what is left of this world is very little compared with what is already past. If you set a time limit - for example, fifty years - for someone who owes you money, when forty five years have passed, the time for paying back the money will seem close in comparison to what has passed. The *ahaadeeth* indicate the same as we have described here. In Bukhari and Muslim, it is narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The lifespan of this ummah, in comparison with the past nations, is like the time from *'Asr* prayer until the sun sets." According to another version, "What is left for you, in comparison to the nations who came before you, is like the time between *'Asr* prayer and sunset."

The hadith likens man's existence to one day of this world, in which the Muslim ummah emerged at the time of *'Asr* (mid-afternoon). The period of man's existence is like the time of this day that has passed from *Fajr* (dawn) until *'Asr* (mid-afternoon), and the remaining time until the Hour comes is like the time between *'Asr* and *Maghrib* (sunset). The texts clearly indicate that we are the last of the nations and that this nation will come to an end when the Hour begins.

According to another hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim from Sahl (ﷺ), the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "I and the Hour have been sent like this," and he gestured with his two fingers. This is narrated by Muslim from Sahl with the wording: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

'Whilst gesturing with his index and middle fingers, 'I and the Hour have been sent like this.'"[3]

The meaning is that if we were to liken time to the middle finger, that what was left at the time when the Messenger (ﷺ) was sent was like the extent to which the middle finger is longer than the index finger, and what had already passed was like the length of the index finger in relation to the middle finger. Humans may feel that what is left is a long time, because their comprehension is limited and their vision is restricted, but by the standards of Allah, it is close at hand and it is a short time.

﴿أَتَىٰٓ أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوهُ ... ﴿١﴾ ﴾

﴿The Event [the Hour or the punishment of disbelievers and polytheists or the Islamic laws or commandments] ordained by Allah will come to pass, so seek not to hasten it...﴾ *(Qur'an 16: 1)*

﴿... وَمَآ أَمْرُ ٱلسَّاعَةِ إِلَّا كَلَمْحِ ٱلْبَصَرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ ... ﴿٧٧﴾ ﴾

﴿...And the matter of the Hour is not but as a twinkling of the eye, or even nearer...﴾ *(Qur'an 16: 77)*

Imam Aḥmad narrated that 'Utbah ibn Ghazwaan said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) addressed us; he praised and glorified Allah, then he said:

'This world is nearly finished... and there is nothing left of it but a little, like the little bit of water at the bottom of a vessel which will soon be drunk. You are moving from this world to a

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[3] Bukhari, *Kitaab ar-Riqaaq, Baab Qawl an-Nabi: "Bu'ithtu ana was-Saa'ah kahaataayn; Fatḥ al-Baari,* 11/347. Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Qarb as-Saa'ah,* 4/2468, no. 2950. Also by Bukhari and Muslim from Anas (may Allah be pleased with him).

world that has no end, so go to it with the best that you can..." This is narrated only by Muslim.[4]

3 - No One Knows the Exact Time of the Hour

The Messenger (ﷺ) was asked about the Hour, and he said: "The one who is asked about it does not know more than the one who is asking." The one who was asking was Jibreel (Gabriel), who appeared to him in human form. If the noblest of the angels, Jibreel, and the noblest of mankind, Muhammad (ﷺ), did not know when it will come, then of course no one else can know when it will happen.

The Qur'an clearly states that the time when the Hour will come is one of the things that are known only to Allah. Hence, no one can know when it will happen, no angel who is close to Allah and no Prophet who was sent.

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَاهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِندَ رَبِّي لَا يُجَلِّيهَا لِوَقْتِهَا إِلَّا هُوَ
ثَقُلَتْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا تَأْتِيكُمْ إِلَّا بَغْتَةً يَسْأَلُونَكَ كَأَنَّكَ حَفِيٌّ عَنْهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا
عِلْمُهَا عِندَ اللَّهِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

﴿They ask you about the Hour [Day of Resurrection]: 'When will be its appointed time?' Say: 'The knowledge thereof is with my Lord [Alone]. None can reveal its time but He. Heavy is its burden through the heavens and the earth. It shall not come upon you except all of a sudden.' They ask you as if you have a good knowledge of it. Say: 'The knowledge thereof is with Allah [Alone], but most of mankind know not.'﴾ *(Qur'an 7: 187)*

In another *aayah*, Allah (ﷻ) says:

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[4] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 6/468

﴿يَسْـَٔلُكَ ٱلنَّاسُ عَنِ ٱلسَّاعَةِ ۖ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ تَكُونُ قَرِيبًا ﴿٦٣﴾﴾

﴿People ask you concerning the Hour, say: 'The knowledge of it is with Allah only. What do you know? It may be that the Hour is near!'﴾ *(Qur'an 33: 63)*

And Allah (ﷻ) says in *Soorat an-Naazi'aat*:

﴿يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلسَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَىٰهَا ﴿٤٢﴾ فِيمَ أَنتَ مِن ذِكْرَىٰهَآ ﴿٤٣﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ مُنتَهَىٰهَآ ﴿٤٤﴾﴾

﴿They ask you [O' Muhammad] about the Hour - when will be its appointed time? You have no knowledge to say anything about it. To your Lord belongs [the knowledge of] the term thereof.﴾ *(Qur'an 79: 42-44)*

These *aayaat* clearly indicate that knowledge of the time when the Hour will come to pass is something which is known only to the Lord of Glory, and that it will come suddenly. The Messenger (ﷺ) does not know when it will happen. The Hour is one of the five Keys of the Unseen, things that are concealed and known only to Allah:

﴿إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلسَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ ٱلْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْحَامِ ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى نَفْسٌۢ بِأَىِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌۢ ﴿٣٤﴾﴾

﴿Verily, Allah, with Him [Alone] is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs. No person knows what he will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he will die. Verily, Allah is All-Knower, All-Aware [of things].﴾

(Qur'an 31: 34)

In Bukhari it is narrated from Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The Keys of the Unseen are five, and no one knows them except Allah." Then he recited this *aayah*: ﴾Verily, Allah, with Him [Alone] is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs. No person knows what he will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he will die. Verily, Allah is All-Knower, All-Aware [of things].﴿ *(Qur'an 31: 34)*[5]

4 - The Reason Why Knowledge of the Timing of the Hour is Concealed

People may wonder, what is the wisdom behind concealing the time when the Hour will come to pass and the resurrection will begin? The answer is that its concealment is connected to what is in the best interests of the human soul. The fact that its timing is unknown and that man does not know when this great event, which he is certain will surely come to pass, will actually befall him, makes him continuously watchful. Sayyid Quṭb (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The unknown is a basic element of human life and in the human psychological make-up. There has to be something unknown in their lives which they are looking out for. If everything were exposed and known to them, by their very nature their activities would cease and their life would become stagnant. When there is something unknown, they pursue it, take care, have hope, strive and learn. They display their hidden potential and the potential of the universe around them. Their hearts and emotions are connected to that unknown Hour and this keeps them from wandering aimlessly. They do not know when the Hour will come, so they are always watching for it and always preparing for it. This is the case of one whose *fiṭrah* is sound and upright. But the one whose *fiṭrah* is corrupt

[5] *Jaami' al-'Uloom al-Ḥikam* by Ibn Rajab, 37

and who follows his desires is negligent and heedless, so when the Hour comes he will be doomed."[6]

5 - It is not Permissible to Try to Find out the Exact Time of the Hour

People wondered a great deal about the time of the Hour, and they asked the Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) about it. The answer came from the One Who revealed the Book, stating that the Hour is the matter of the Unseen, and that knowledge of the time when it will come to pass is something which belongs only to Allah, the Exalted:

﴿يَسْـَٔلُكَ ٱلنَّاسُ عَنِ ٱلسَّاعَةِ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ تَكُونُ قَرِيبًا ﴿٦٣﴾﴾

﴾People ask you concerning the Hour, say: 'The knowledge of it is with Allah only. What do you know? It may be that the Hour is near!'﴿ *(Qur'an 33: 63)*

﴿يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلسَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَىٰهَا ﴿٤٢﴾ فِيمَ أَنتَ مِن ذِكْرَىٰهَآ ﴿٤٣﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ مُنتَهَىٰهَآ ﴿٤٤﴾﴾

﴾They ask you [O' Muhammad] about the Hour - when will be its appointed time? You have no knowledge to say anything about it. To your Lord belongs [the knowledge of] the term thereof.﴿ *(Qur'an 79: 42-44)*

Allah has not revealed this knowledge to any angel who is close to Him or to any Prophet whom He sent. Hence the Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) said to Jibreel (Gabriel) when he asked him about the Hour,

[6] *Al-Yawm al-Aakhir fi Zilaal al-Qur'an*, compiled by Aḥmad Faa'iz, p. 98

"The one who is being asked does not know more than the one who is asking."

So looking into this matter and claiming that the Hour will come in a certain year, is attributing words to Allah without knowledge. Indulging in this matter goes against the methodology of the Qur'an and of the Prophet which tells people not to look into this matter, and calls them to prepare for this Day by having faith and doing righteous deeds.

Those who indulge in this matter think that they will be able to find out something which even the Messenger (ﷺ) and Jibreel (ﷺ) did not know. That should be sufficient to warn and deter anyone who has a heart or gives ear while he is heedful (cf. Qur'an 50:37). We say to them: you should be content with what the Messenger (ﷺ), his companions and the Imams of this ummah have been content with down throughout the ages. If there was any interest to be served by mankind knowing the time of the Hour, Allah would have informed them of that, but He has concealed that knowledge from them, and this is in their best interests.

Those who come later should learn from those who came before them. Some of those who came before us indulged in discussing this matter, and they said that the Hour or some of its signs would happen at a certain time, then that time came and none of those things happened - the Hour did not come and neither did any of its signs. Among those who did this was Ṭabari (may Allah have mercy on him and forgive him): he concluded from some of the texts that the end of the world would come five hundred years after the Prophet's mission.[7] Approximately a thousand years have passed from the time which he specified, and what he said has not come true.

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[7] *Al-Muqaddimah* by Ibn Khaldoon, p. 590

The scholar Suyooṭi (may Allah forgive him) said, in a chapter entitled *Al-Kashf*, that the Hour would come at the beginning of the fifteenth century AH.[8] Now we are a few years past the time that he stated, and the Hour has not come yet; indeed, many of its signs have not yet happened.

As-Suhayli compiled the Abbreviated Letters (*al-ḥuroof al-muqaṭṭa'ah*) which appear at the beginning of some chapters of the Qur'an, omitted those which were repeated, then added up their numerical values; based on the result, he defined a date that was not more than a few hundred years.[9]

Many people discussed this matter and tried too hard to define a time, without any evidence (*ḍaleel*); what they said is no more than speculation and conjecture. The most recent efforts was by a Baha'i doctor who claimed that the Hour will come in 1710 AH; this claim is based on the numerical values of the abbreviated letters (*al-ḥuroof al-muqaṭṭa'ah*) which appear at the beginning of some *soorahs*. This method has already been proven to be false, because it was used in the past by some who set a date which turned out to be wrong. They used the same method, although the results may have differed, and it was proven that they were wrong.

The great scholar Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him and reward him immensely) discussed the opinion of those who indulged in this matter and tried to set a date for the Hour. He said: "Those who spoke of the precise time of the Hour, such as the author of the book called *Al-Durr al-Munaẓẓam fi Ma'rifat al-A'ẓam*, in which he mentioned ten signs which indicate its time, and those who spoke of it based on *al-ḥuroof al-mu'jam* (the letters of the dictionary), and the one who spoke of it in *'Anqaa' al-Mughrib*[10] -

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[8] *Lawaami' al-Anwaar al-Bahiyyah*, 2/66

[9] *Al-Muqaddimah* by Ibn Khaldoon, p. 591

[10] Ibn al-'Arabi who believed in *waḥdat al-wujood* (unity of all that exists)

these people and their ilk, although they may be thought of highly by their followers, are mostly liars and fabricators.[11] In many aspects, it is quite clear that they were speaking without knowledge, even though they claimed to have knowledge of the unseen and the mysteries of the universe. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَٱلْإِثْمَ وَٱلْبَغْيَ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَأَن
تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ سُلْطَٰنًا وَأَن تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾﴾

﴾Say [O' Muhammad]: "[But] the things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are *Al-Fawaaḥish* [great evil sins and every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse] whether committed openly or secretly, sins [of all kinds], unrighteous oppression, joining partners [in worship] with Allah for which He has given no authority, and saying things about Allah of which you have no knowledge.'﴿ *(Qur'an 7: 33)*."[12]

Undoubtedly claiming to know exactly when the Hour will come is a kind of speculation and conjecture.

6 - Confusion Surrounding the Idea of Specifying the Time of the Hour

We have explained above that the time of the Hour is the matter of the unseen and is something which is not known to anyone except Allah. But confusion may arise from the fact that there are *aḥaadeeth* which, some people think, specify when it will happen. Some of these *aḥaadeeth* are not *ṣaḥeeḥ*, so we need not pay any attention to them,

[11] The Shaykh said "mostly" because some of those who researched this matter made mistakes but they did not intend to mislead people, such as Ṭabari and Suyooṭi, may Allah have mercy on them. (Author)

[12] *Majmoo' Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam*, 4/342

and it is not permissible to use them to oppose the texts which give definitive evidence. Others are *saheeh*, but they do not specify when the Day of Resurrection will come.

Among the false and fabricated *ahaadeeth* which contradict the clear statements of the Qur'an - as was noted by the great scholar Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) is the hadith about how long this world will last: "(Its duration) is seven thousand years, and we are in the seventh millenium."

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "This is one of the most obvious lies, because if it were *saheeh*, everyone would know that we have only two hundred and fifty one years left (from the time at which Shaykh Ibn al-Qayyim wrote this). But Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿They ask you about the Hour [Day of Resurrection]: 'When will be its appointed time?' Say: 'The knowledge thereof is with my Lord [Alone]. None can reveal its time but He. Heavy is its burden through the heavens and the earth. It shall not come upon you except all of a sudden.' They ask you as if you have a good knowledge of it. Say: 'The knowledge thereof is with Allah [Alone].'﴾ *(Qur'an 7: 187)*."[13]

What this hadith indicates is definitely false. The fact is that the seventh millenium ended four hundred years ago, and many of the signs of the Hour have not yet come to pass.

Among the *saheeh ahaadeeth* that do not specify the time of the Hour is the hadith narrated by Muslim from Jaabir ibn 'Abdullah, who said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, one month before he died,

> 'You ask me about the Hour. The knowledge of that is with Allah (Alone). I swear by Allah, there is no soul on earth today, who will remain alive after one hundred years from now.'"[14]

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[13] *Al-Manaar al-Muneef*, by Ibn al-Qayyim, p. 80

[14] *Jaami' al-Usool*, 10/387, hadith no. 7890

Bukhari and Muslim narrated that 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) led us in *'Ishaa'* prayer one night towards the end of his life. When he said the *salaam* (at the end of the prayer), he said:

> 'Do you see this night of yours? One hundred years from now, there will not be anyone left who is on the face of the earth now.'"[15]

If we think about these two *aḥaadeeth*, we will see that they clearly indicate that the Messenger (ﷺ) was not referring to the Hour here, rather he was speaking about the end of the century in which he was living, i.e., that after one hundred years, everyone who was alive when the Messenger (ﷺ) said this would have died. Ibn 'Umar understood this and he explained it to others when they came up with various interpretations of what the Messenger (ﷺ) had said. In *Sunan at-Tirmidhi* and *Sunan Abi Dawood*, after quoting the hadith mentioned above, (it is narrated that) 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar said: "The people were astounded at what the Messenger (ﷺ) had said in these *aḥaadeeth* which mention one hundred years. But in fact the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'There will not be anyone left on the face of the earth,' meaning when this century comes to an end.'"[16]

In Bukhari and Muslim, it is narrated that 'Aa'ishah said: "When Bedouins would come to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), they used to ask him about the Hour and when the Hour would come. He would look at the youngest one among them and say, 'If this one lives, he will not grow old until the hour comes upon you.'" Hishaam said: he meant their death.[17]

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[15] *Ibid* 388, hadith no. 7891

[16] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'*, 10/388, hadith no. 7891

[17] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/389, no. 7892

In Muslim it is narrated from Anas ibn Maalik (ﷺ) that a man asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), "When will the Hour be?" The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) remained silent for a while, then he looked at a boy from (the tribe of) Azdshanu'ah who was in front of him, and said, "If this boy lives, he will not grow old before the hour comes." Anas said, "That boy was my age at that time."[18] What the Messenger (ﷺ) was referring to in these hadiths was the "hour" of those whom he was addressing, as was explained by Hishaam, one of the narrators of the first hadith, when he said, "He meant, their death." The "hour" of each person is his death. This response of the Messenger (ﷺ) was a wise response, because it directed them to prepare themselves and be ready for death, for death is very close.

7 - Definition of the Signs (*Ashraaṭ* and *Aayaat*)

Although Allah has concealed the time of the Hour from His slaves, He has told them of some of the indicators and signs which tell them that it is drawing nigh.

The Qur'an calls these indicators *ashraaṭ al-saa'ah* (signs or portents of the Hour). Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَهَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا ٱلسَّاعَةَ أَن تَأْتِيَهُم بَغْتَةً فَقَدْ جَآءَ أَشْرَاطُهَا... ﴿١٨﴾﴾

﴾Do they then await [anything] other than the Hour that it should come upon them suddenly? But some of its portents [indications and signs] have already come...﴿ *(Qur'an 47: 18)*

Sharaṭ (pl. *ashraaṭ*) means a sign. *Ashraaṭ* (*as-saa'ah*) means the portents or signs of the Hour.[19] In *Fatḥ al-Baari* it says: "*Ashraaṭ*

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[18] *Ibid* no. 7893

[19] *Mukhtaar as-Siḥaah*, 324

means the signs which will immediately be followed by the onset of the Hour."[20]

Some of the scholars gave these portents the name of *aayaat* (signs). *Aayaat* means indicators which point towards something, such as the markers which are set up in the desert to show where the road runs, or the signs which are erected on the shoreline to guide the ships which are plowing the waves, or the signposts which are placed near cities to show travellers how close they are to that particular city.

Aṭ-Ṭeebi said: "The *aayaat* are the signs of the Hour, either to show that it is nigh or to show that it is actually happening. The former include the *Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ), the descent of 'Eesa (Jesus), Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj and the eclipse of the moon. The latter include the smoke, the rising of the sun from the West, the emergence of the Beast and the fire which will gather the people together."[21]

8 - The Benefits of Studying the Signs of the Hour and the Unseen Events to Appear in the Future

It may be said, you have exhausted yourselves in studying matters which are of little benefit. It would be better if you concerned yourselves with the affairs and problems of the Muslims instead of wasting so much time in investigating things which will happen in the future. You should concern yourselves with the reality in which you are living, instead of some other world in which you hope to live or that you fear may come upon you. You are running away from facing real difficulties. We say to them: we do not have any choice regarding the events of the future; it is not up to us whether we should study or ignore this matter. Studying and believing in these matters is an essential part of the religion which was brought by our Messenger

[20] *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/79

[21] *Ibid*, 11/352

(ﷺ). Some of it is mentioned in the Qur'an, and some of it was mentioned in the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ). The *Ṣaḥaabah* learned all of that and concerned themselves with it; they paid a great deal of attention to it. Belief in the unseen is the first characteristic for which Allah praises the pious who are guided and who will be successful:

﴿الٓمٓ ۝١ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ ۛ فِيهِ ۛ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ۝٢ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ۝٣﴾

﴾*Alif-Laam-Meem*. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'an and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings.] This is the Book [the Qur'an], whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are *Al-Muttaqoon* [the pious believers of Islamic Monotheism who fear Allah much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)]. Who believe in the *Ghayb*[22] and perform *Aṣ-Ṣalaah* (*Iqaamat-aṣ-Ṣalaah*), and spend out of what we have provided for them [i.e. give *Zakaah*, spend on themselves, their parents, their children, their wives, and also give charity to the poor and also in Allah's Cause - *Jihaad*].﴿ *(Qur'an 2: 1-3)*

It is true that many Muslims are preoccupied with matters of the unseen for which there is no evidence (*daleel*) from the Qur'an or

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[22] *Al-Ghayb*: literally means a thing not seen. But this word includes vast meanings: Belief in Allah, Angels, Holy Books, Allah's Messengers, Day of Resurrection and *Al-Qadar* (Divine Pre-ordainments). It also includes what Allah and His Messenger informed about the knowledge of the matters of past, present, and future, e.g., news about the creation of the heavens and earth, botanical and zoological life, the news about the nations of the past, and about Paradise and Hell. (Footnote from Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an by Dr. Muhammad Muḥsin Khan and Dr. Taqi-ud-Din al-Hilali).

Sunnah, and some of those who claim to be scholars went too far in such matters, but concerning oneself with the *ṣaḥeeḥ* texts is a part of this religion, revealed by the All-Knowing, All-Aware.

We can and should blame those Muslims who refrain from taking action because they are waiting for the events of which the Messenger (ﷺ) spoke to happen, such as those who do not engage in jihaad because they are waiting for the Mahdi to appear, but this is a mistake which needs to be corrected. We should not ignore the *ṣaḥeeḥ* texts because our pious predecessors, though sincerely believing in the unseen as described in sound reports, did not neglect jihaad or other kinds of action.

We should also blame severely those who interpret the words of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the texts which speak of matters of the unseen to mean something other than that which was intended, they claim something (unreal) and mislead the people, like those who, down the ages, claimed to be the Mahdi - except in cases where they were mistaken. Those mistakes can be put right but this misinterpretation should not lead us to reject the sound texts. Truth is truth and falsehood is falsehood; we cannot ward off falsehood by rejecting the truth. To those who denounce us for our concern with studying the *ṣaḥeeḥ* texts on this issue, we would point out the immense efforts being made by modern scientists to discover the unknown events of the distant past, and unknown events of the future, and unknown features of the space which surrounds us. Hence we see them studying the relics of past nations, and the writings, artifacts and ruins that they left behind; we see them paying attention to what fortune-tellers and soothsayers tell them, even though what those people say is all lies and you can hardly find any element of truth in it; and we see them building huge telescopes and sending satellites into space so that they can find out what they do not know. If this is how humans are, always wanting to find out about what they do not

know and to find out about the past and the future, and to find out about the universe around them, is it not more appropriate that they should look at facts which they receive from a source which never lies? The information brought by the texts concerning these matters is valuable and is indeed beyond doubt, but human beings are too arrogant when they turn away from this valuable knowledge that is based on truthful Revelation, and they lose a great deal when they reject this beneficial knowledge. Moreover, there are people who want us to keep away from studying these topics on the basis of the texts of the Revelation whilst they themselves run after the information produced by western scientists on this topic, which is mixed with lot of confusion and lies.

We may sum up the benefits that we gain from studying the reports which speak of the portents of the Hour as follows:

(1) Belief in these reports, if they are proven to be sound, is part of belief in Allah and belief in His Messenger. How can we believe in Allah and His Messenger, then not believe in what they tell us?! ﴿This is the Book [the Qur'an], whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are *Al-Muttaqoon* [the pious believers]. Who believe in the *Ghayb...*﴾ *(Qur'an 2: 2-3)*

(2) The fact that some of these prophecies have come to pass as they were described in the reports reaffirms and strengthens faith. Muslims in all ages have witnessed events happening as they were foretold in the sound texts. The *Ṣaḥaabah* witnessed the victory of the Byzantines over the Persians, then the victory of the Muslims over both the Persians and the Byzantines, and the prevalence of Islam over all other religions. They saw the ummah split in the year when the Messenger (ﷺ) said it would happen, and they saw many events unfold as foretold in the texts. Similar things have happened in every era, the Muslims have witnessed events as foretold in the texts. Undoubtedly this has a great impact on strengthening the believer's

faith, and this is a means of calling others to the truth which our Lord has given us.

(3) Strengthening belief in the Day of Resurrection. The resurrection and its terrors are matters of the Unseen which Allah and His Messenger have informed us about. Belief in them is one of the fundamentals of faith. The fact that events in this world unfold as described in the texts is a clear indication of the truthfulness of all of the reports, including the reports about the Hour. And all of that comes from Allah.

(4) Allah sent His Messenger to show us what is good and warn us against what is evil. The Messenger (ﷺ) showed his *Ṣaḥaabah* the best way to respond to the events that happened during his lifetime.

In the reports about future events there are directives for those members of his ummah who come after him, telling them how they should deal with events in which the right way of handling the matter may not be clear. It is narrated that 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aaṣ said: "We were with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) on a journey, and we halted at a place. Some of us began to erect their tents, others began to compete with one another in shooting arrows, and others began to graze their beasts, when an announcer of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) announced that the people should gather together for prayer. So we gathered around the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He said: 'It was the duty of every Prophet before me to guide his followers to what he knew was good for them and warn them against what he knew was bad for them. However, this Ummah of yours has its days of peace and (security) at the beginning of its career, and in the last phase of its existence it will be afflicted with trials and with things disagreeable to you. (In this phase of the Ummah), there will be tremendous trials, one after the other, each making the previous one pale into insignificance. When afflicted with a trial, the believer will say: This is going to bring about my destruction. When (the trial) is

over, he will be afflicted with another trial and the believer will say: This surely is going to be my end. Whoever wishes to be delivered from the Fire and enter Paradise should die with faith in Allah and the Last Day, and should treat the people as he wishes to be treated by them. He who swears allegiance to an Imam (leader) and gives him the pledge of his hand and the sincerity of his heart (i.e. submits to him both outwardly and inwardly) should obey him to the best of his ability. If another man comes forward (as a claimant to leadership), disputing his authority, they (the Muslims) should behead the latter." This version is narrated by Muslim; this is also narrated by Nasaa'i, Ibn Maajah and Aḥmad.[23]

Examples of this advice which had a great impact in guiding the Muslims to the truth include: when the Prophet (ﷺ) gave 'Uthmaan (ﷺ) the glad tidings of Paradise because of a calamity that would befall him; when he told 'Ammaar that he would be killed by the group that was in the wrong; when he ordered Abu Dharr to keep away from *fitnah* and not to fight even if he was killed. This meaning may also be derived from the hadith of Ḥudhayfah, in which he asked the Messenger (ﷺ) about evil, fearing that it would catch up with him, whilst his other companions used to ask the Messenger (ﷺ) about good things. Further examples include the command of the Messenger (ﷺ) to the Muslims not to take anything from the mountain of gold which will be uncovered by the Euphrates at the end of time; his telling them about the true nature of the *Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ) and the specious arguments that he will produce; and other issues where the Messenger (ﷺ) has taught his ummah the right way to deal with them.

(5) The Muslims may be faced with events in the future concerning which they will need to know the rulings of shari'ah. If the Muslims

[23] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, hadith no. 241

are left to their own devices, they may differ and may fail to be guided to the right path. Indeed, it may be obligatory and essential to explain the *shar'i* rulings concerning these matters, and not doing so would be a shortcoming, but shari'ah is above any shortcomings. For example, the Messenger (ﷺ) told us that the *Dajjaal* will remain on earth for forty days, one of which will be like a year, one will be like a month, one will be like a week and the rest of his days will be like our (normal) days. The *Ṣaḥaabah* asked the Messenger (ﷺ) about those long days, and whether the prayers of a normal day would be sufficient on one of those days. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said "No, estimate it and work it out." If people were left to their own devices, they would fall short in their prayers on the days which were not like normal days. And the Messenger (ﷺ) informed us that after his descent (to the earth), 'Eesa (Jesus) will not accept *jizyah* from the Jews and Christians; he will not accept anything from them but *eemaan* (belief or faith). This explanation from the Messenger (ﷺ) is essential, because 'Eesa will rule according to this (Islamic) shari'ah. This shari'ah states that the *jizyah* is to be accepted from anyone who pays it, until 'Eesa ibn Maryam descends; at that point, *jizyah* will be abolished and everyone who refuses to believe will be killed, even if he offers *jizyah*.

(6) Trying to find out what will happen in the future is something natural. Man finds in himself a strong desire to know about the things that may happen to the human race, or to the nation of which he is a member, or to himself. Hence, leaders and rulers, and even individuals, resort to consulting sorcerers, fortune-tellers and astrologers in order to find out these things. But Allah has given them the truth which is sufficient. Ibn Khaldoon discussed this matter in the *Muqaddimah* (Introduction) to his *Taareekh* (History), where he said: "Know that one of the characteristics of the human soul is a longing to know how things will work out and to know what is going

to happen in terms of life and death, good and bad, especially in matters that have to do with the general welfare of the world, such as how long this world will remain, how long a nation will remain and when it will pass. Seeking to discover these things is human and is something towards which people are naturally inclined. Hence we see many people trying to find these things out from their dreams and from the words of soothsayers, in the case of kings and commoners who consult them, as is well known. In the cities we find a type of people who earn their living from that, because they know that the people have a keen interest in it. They offer their services in the streets and in shops for those who ask them about these things. So the women and children of the city, and those who are of weak intellect, go to them in order to ask them how things will work out with regard to earnings, power, livelihood, relationships, enemies and so on. They go to those who draw lines in the sand, or who use pebbles and seeds, or who look into mirrors and water (all forms of divination). These are all kinds of evil actions that happen in various regions, as the shari'ah clearly denounced such things and stated that the unseen is concealed from mankind, except for those to whom Allah shows something in his dream or by means of inspiration.

Those who pay the most attention to such things are the rulers and kings, who try to find out how long their reigns will last. Hence people of knowledge devoted a great deal of attention to such matters. Every nation has soothsayers, astrologers or *walis* ("saints") who tell them about the dominion that they may look forward to, or the dawn of a new era that is about to begin, or about wars and battles that they will engage in, how long their nation will last, how many kings there will be in their dynasty, and what their names will be. Such things are known as *hidthaan* or predictions.

The Arabs also had soothsayers and fortune-tellers, whom they would consult about such things. They would foretell the kings and

dynasties that would arise among the Arabs, as happened with Shaqq and Sutayh, who interpreted the dreams of Rabee'ah ibn Naṣr, one of the kings of Yemen. They told him that the Ethiopians would take over their land, then it would be restored to them, and that the Arabs would have power and dominion after that. Sutayh also interpreted the dreams of Al-Moobadhaan when Chosroes sent the story of the dream to him with 'Abd al-Maseeḥ, and he told him of the coming Arab state. The Berbers also had soothsayers, one of the most famous was Moosa ibn Ṣaaliḥ from the tribe of Yifran (or as per another report, from Ghamrah). Some of his words were narrated in verse in the Berber language. They contained many predictions, most of which concerned the dominion and dynasties of the Zinaatah tribe in the *Maghreb* (Morocco). These predictions are in circulation among the people of the mountains, who sometimes claim that he was a *wali* ("saint") or a soothsayer. Some of them even claim that he was a Prophet, because in their view he lived a long time before the *Hijrah*. And Allah knows best."[24]

9 - Categorizing the Signs of the Hour

Many *aḥaadeeth* have been narrated in which the Messenger (ﷺ) listed a number of Signs of the Hour. Bukhari and Muslim narrated in their *Ṣaḥeeḥs* from Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not come until two large groups fight one another and a great number of people will be killed, and their claim will be the same; until nearly thirty lying imposters (pseudo-christs / prophets) (*Dajjaals*) raise their heads, all of whom will claim to be a messenger of Allah; until knowledge is taken away, earthquakes become frequent, time passes

[24] *Al-Muqaddimah* by Ibn Khaldoon, pp. 587-588

quickly, tribulation (*fitan*) becomes prevalent and killing becomes widespread; until wealth becomes widespread among you and will increase so much that a wealthy man will be concerned as to who will accept his charity and the one to whom he offers it will say, 'I do not need it'; until people will compete in building tall structures; until a man will pass by a man's grave and will say, 'Would that I were in his place'; until the sun rises from the west, and when it rises and the people see it, they will all believe, but that will be the time when belief will not avail them anything if they did not believe before or their faith did not earn them anything good."[25]

In Bukhari it is narrated that 'Awf ibn Maalik (ﷺ) said: "I came to the Prophet (ﷺ) during the campaign of Tabook, when he was in a leather tent. He said,

'Count six things just before the Hour: my death, the conquest of *Bayt al-Maqdis* (Jerusalem), then widespread death which will come upon you like murrain in sheep, then an abundance of wealth such that even if a man is given a hundred *dinars* he will remain angry and discontent, then a *fitnah* which will not leave any house among the Arabs but it will enter it, then a truce between you and *Bani al-Asfar* (the Romans), which they will break and will come to you with eighty banners, under each of which will be twelve thousand (troops).'"[26]

It is narrated that Anas related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

'Among the Signs of the Hour will be obscenity and obscene actions and the severing of family ties; the trustworthy will be

[25] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan*, hadith no. 7120, *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/81; Muslim. Ibn al-Atheer compiled all the versions of this report in *Jaami' al-Uṣool* (10/404, hadith no. 7920).

[26] Muslim. See *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/411, hadith no. 7927

> accused of dishonesty and the dishonest will be trusted." This is narrated by Al-Bazzaar and by Ṭabaraani in *Al-Awsaṭ* from Anas. Aḥmad and Al-Bazzaar also narrated it from Ibn 'Amr.[27]

It is narrated by Ṭabaraani that 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Among the Signs of the Hour will be that a man will pass through the mosque and will not pray two *rak'ahs* there; and a man will only give *salaams* to those whom he knows.'"[28]

It is narrated on the authority of Anas: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Among the Signs of the Hour will be that the people will try to outdo one another in building mosques." This is narrated by Abu Dawood, Aḥmad, Ad-Daarimi and Ibn Khuzaymah.[29]

The Signs that the Messenger (ﷺ) mentioned in these *aḥaadeeth* and in other *aḥaadeeth* are many. The scholars divided them into two categories, the minor signs and the major signs.

The minor signs may be further divided into two, those which have already happened and those which have not happened yet.

Among those that already happened are those which came and gone. Other signs may happen more than once, or emerge slowly, or happen repeatedly. Some which have happened in the past may happen again in the future.

Hence, we will divide the signs of the Hour into four categories:

1. Minor signs which have come and gone

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[27] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' as-Sagheer*, 5/213

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] *Ibid.*

2. Minor signs which have happened and are still happening or may be repeated

3. Minor signs which have not yet happened

4. Major signs

CHAPTER TWO
SIGNS OF THE HOUR WHICH HAVE HAPPENED

By this we mean signs which came and gone, and will not be repeated. There are many such signs, some of which we would like to mention here.

1 - The Sending of the Messenger (ﷺ) and his Death

One of the Signs of the Hour is the sending of the Messenger (ﷺ) and his death. According to the hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim, Sahl ibn Sa'd said: "I saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gesturing with his fingers like this, the middle finger and the finger which is next to the thumb (i.e., the index finger), and he said, 'I and the Hour have been sent like these two."

According to another report he said: "I and the Hour have been sent like these two," and he gestured with his two fingers, stretching them out.[1] In Bukhari, Muslim and Sunan at-Tirmidhi it is narrated that Anas ibn Maalik (ﷺ) related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'I and the Hour have been sent like these two, like the difference between the one and the other,' and he held his forefinger and middle finger up together."[2]

In the books of *Seerah* it is narrated that the Jews used to say of the Messenger (ﷺ) that he would be sent with the Hour.

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[1] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/384

[2] *Ibid*

In the previous chapter we quoted the hadith of 'Awf ibn Maalik narrated by Bukhari, in which the Messenger (ﷺ) is reported to have said, "Count six things just before the Hour: my death..."

Imam Aḥmad narrated in his *Musnad* with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from Abu Jubayrah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "I have been sent in the heralding breeze of the Hour."[3]

As Ibn al-Atheer explained, the "heralding breeze" refers to the gentle breeze with which the wind starts, i.e., I have been sent at the beginning of the signs of the Hour.

2 - The Splitting of the Moon

The scholars are unanimous that the moon was split during the time of the Messenger (ﷺ), and that its splitting was one of the dazzling miracles.[4] The Qur'an clearly states this, in the *aayah*:

﴿ٱقْتَرَبَتِ ٱلسَّاعَةُ وَٱنشَقَّ ٱلْقَمَرُ ۝١ وَإِن يَرَوْا۟ ءَايَةً يُعْرِضُوا۟ وَيَقُولُوا۟ سِحْرٌ
مُّسْتَمِرٌّ ۝٢﴾

﴿"The Hour has drawn near, and the moon has been cleft asunder [the people of Makkah requested Prophet Muhammad to show them a miracle, so he showed them the splitting of the moon]. And if they see a sign, they turn away, and say: 'This is continuous magic'"﴾
(Qur'an 54: 1-2)

An-Nawawi said: "Al-Qaaḍi said: The splitting of the moon was one of the major miracles of our Prophet (ﷺ). It has been narrated by a number of the *Ṣaḥaabah* (may Allah be pleased with them), as well as being stated clearly in the *aayah*. Al-Zajjaaj said: some of the

[3] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth as-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 2/467, hadith no. 808

[4] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 6/469

deviating innovators denied it and went against the consensus, and that is because Allah blinded their hearts. It is not something irrational to be denied, because the moon is a created thing and Allah can do whatever He wills with it, just as He will extinguish it and roll it up at the end of its time.[5]

Ibn Katheer quoted the *aḥaadeeth* about the splitting of the moon in his *Tafseer* of *Soorat al-Qamar*. There are a great many *ṣaḥeeḥ aḥaadeeth* to this effect.[6] Muslim also quoted them in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*, including the hadith of Anas (ﷺ) which says that the people of Makkah asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to show them a sign, so he showed them the splitting of the moon, twice.[7] 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (ﷺ) narrared: "The moon was split into two halves at the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'Bear witness, bear witness!' "According to another report from 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood, he said, "Whilst we were with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in Mina, the moon was split into two halves, one half behind the mountain and the other in front of it. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to us, 'Bear witness!'"[8]

3 - The Fire in Ḥijaaz Illuminated the Necks of the Camels in Buṣra

It is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) said:

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[5] *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 17/143

[6] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 6/469

[7] Muslim, *Baab Inshiqaaq al-Qamr*, 4/2159, hadith no. 2802

[8] *Ibid*, 4/2158, hadith no. 2800

> "The Hour will not come until fire comes out of the land of Ḥijaaz and will illuminate the necks of the camels in Buṣra."[9]

The great sign which was foretold by the most truthful one did indeed come to pass in the manner in which the Messenger (ﷺ) had described it. It emerged in 654 AH.

The great scholar and historian Ibn Katheer spoke of the events of 654 AH and wrote of this fire. He said:

In this year appeared the fire from the land of al-Ḥijaaz which illuminated the necks of the camels in Buṣra, as was spoken of in the hadith whose authenticity is agreed upon. The leading scholar Al-Ḥaafiẓ Shihaab ad-Deen Abu Shaamah al-Maqdisi spoke about it at length in his book adh-Dhayl wa Sharḥuhu. He quoted from many letters which were sent to Damascus from Al-Ḥijaaz describing this fire which was seen by many eye-witnesses, and how it emerged and what it looked like. Abu Shaamah's[10] conclusion was: Letters came to Damascus from Madeenah, may the best of blessings and peace be upon its inhabitants, saying that a fire had emerged there on the fifth day of *Jumaada al-Aakhir* of this year. The letters were written on the fifth of *Rajab*, and the fire was still raging, and these letters reached us on the tenth of *Sha'baan*. Then he said:

"In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. There arrived in Damascus on the first day of *Sha'baan*, 654 AH, letters from

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[9] This hadith is narrated by Bukhari under, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Khurooj an-Naar, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/78. Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Laa taqoom as-Saa'ah ḥatta takhruja naar min arḍ al-Ḥijaaz*, hadith no. 2902, 4/2227. Buṣra, as noted by An-Nawawi (*An-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/30) is a famous city in Syria. It is the city of Hooraan, between which and Damascus is a journey of three stages (*maraaḥil*). The historians mentioned that events unfolded as described by the Messenger (ﷺ), and the necks of the camels in Buṣra were indeed illuminated and students used to read by its light in places far away from Madeenah.

[10] Abu Shaamah lived at the time when this happened.

the city of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) (Madeenah), in which were descriptions of a mighty event which had happened there, in fulfilment of the hadith of Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) narrated in *aṣ-Ṣaheeḥayn* (Bukhari and Muslim). [Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ)] related: 'The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not come until fire comes out of the land of Ḥijaaz which will illuminate the necks of the camels in Buṣra."'

I was informed by one of the trustworthy witnesses that he had written letters in Taymaa' by the light (of that fire). He said, 'We were in our houses on those nights, and it was as if there was a lamp in each one of our houses. It did not have much heat even though it was so great. Indeed it was one of the signs of Allah."'

Abu Shaamah said: this is a quotation from a letter which we received: "On the night of Wednesday, the third of *Jumaada al-Aakhirah*, 654 AH, there was a huge explosion in the city of the Prophet (Madeenah), then there was a mighty earthquake which shook the ground, the walls, the roofs, the wood and the doors, hour after hour until Friday the fifth of the same month. Then there appeared an immense fire in the ḥarrah[11] close to Qurayẓah, which we could see from our houses inside the city as if it were next to us. It was a huge fire, brighter than three beacons. Rivers of fire were flowing to the valley of Shaẓaa like streams. It blocked the stream of Shaẓaa which is no longer flowing. By Allah, a group of us went out to look at it, and the mountain was flowing with fire. The route of "*Al-Ḥaqij al-'Iraaqi* (the 'Iraqi pilgrims) was blocked, and the flow continued until it reached the harrah, then it stopped, after we had feared that it would come to us, and it flowed back towards the east.

[11] Ḥarrah: Stony area or lava field; there are several of these in the vicinity of Madeenah. (Translator).

From the midst of it there came mountains of fire which devoured stones, and it was similar to what Allah described in His Book,

﴿إِنَّهَا تَرْمِى بِشَرَرٍ كَٱلْقَصْرِ ۝ كَأَنَّهُۥ جِمَٰلَتٌ صُفْرٌ ۝﴾

﴾'Verily! It [Hell] throws sparks [huge] as *Al-Qaṣr* [a fort or a *Qaṣr* (huge log of wood)], as if they were *Jimaalatun Ṣufr* [yellow camels or bundles of ropes].'﴿

(Qur'an 77: 32-33)

The earth was devoured, and I wrote this letter on the fifth day of *Rajab* in the year 654 AH. The fire is increasing and not decreasing. It went back to the harrahs in Qurayẓah. The area from the route of *Al-Ḥaajj al-'Iraaqi* (the 'Iraqi pilgrims) to the harrah is all in flames which we can see at night from Madeenah, as if they are the torches carried by pilgrims. As to the source of this great fire, it is a mountain of red fire. The source from which the fires are flowing at Qurayẓah is growing stronger and people do not know what is going to happen after that. May Allah make our end good. I cannot describe this fire."

Abu Shaamah said: "In another letter it says: during the first week of *Jumaada al-Aakhir* in 654 AH, there appeared to the east of Madeenah a great fire between which and Madeenah was a half-day's journey. There burst forth from the earth a river of fire which reached Mount Uḥud, then it stopped and went back, and this is the state of affairs now. We do not know what to do. When it started, the people went into the Mosque of their Prophet (ﷺ) seeking forgiveness and repenting to their Lord. These are the signs of the (Day of) Resurrection."

He further said: "And in another letter it said, on Monday the first of *Jumaada al-Aakhir*, in 654 AH, there was a noise in Madeenah like the sound of intermittent distant thunder. This continued for two days, then on the night of Wednesday the third of the month, the sound which we had been hearing was followed by an earthquake.

On Friday the fifth of the month, the harrah exploded with a great fire as big as the Mosque of the Prophet (ﷺ). We watched it and it was throwing forth sparks (huge) as *Al-Qaṣr* [a fort or a *Qaṣr* (huge log of wood)], as Allah (ﷻ) says. This was in a place called Ajeeleen. There flowed forth from this fire a river which was four parasangs (i.e., 12 miles) long and four miles wide, and as deep as the height of a man and a half. It flows over the face of the earth and there come forth from it hills and small mountains. It flows over the face of the earth and it is molten rock, until it becomes like molten copper. When it solidifies it becomes black, but before it solidifies its colour is red. Because of this fire, many people have given up their sins and have drawn closer to Allah by acts of worship, and the governor of Madeenah has returned a lot of things which were seized wrongfully from people."

Shaykh Shihaab ad-Deen Abu Shaamah said: "From the letter of Shams ad-Deen ibn Sinaan ibn 'Abdul-Wahhaab ibn Numaylah al-Ḥusayni, the Qaaḍi of Madeenah, to some of his companions: on the night of Wednesday the third of *Jumaada al-Aakhirah*, during the last third of the night there was a great earthquake in Madeenah which scared us. During that night and the following day the earth shook ten times. By Allah, it shook on one occasion when we were around the tomb of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and it shook the minbar so hard that we were afraid (that it might fall), because we could hear the sound of the iron inside it. The lamps of the Noble Sanctuary (*Al-Ḥaram ash-Shareef*) shook. The earthquake lasted until mid-morning on Friday, and it rumbled like the sound of mighty thunder. Then on Friday there emerged in Ra's Ajeeleen, on the way to the harrah, a great fire as big a large city, but we were not aware of it until Saturday night. We were frightened of it and we were utterly terrified. I went to the governor and spoke with him. I said, 'The torment has encompassed us, return to Allah!' So he freed all his slaves and

restored some people's wealth to them. When he had done that, I said to him, 'Come with us now to the Prophet (ﷺ).' So he came with us, and we spent Saturday night there. All the people were there, even the women and children. No one was left in An-Nakheel or in Madeenah, but they were with the Prophet (ﷺ) (i.e., at his grave). Then there flowed forth from it a river of fire, which flowed into the valley of Ajeeleen and blocked the road. Then it went towards Bahraṭ al-Ḥaajj, and it became a sea of fire on top of which were coals, flowing until it blocked that valley and the valley of al-Shaẓaa. No water flowed in that valley again, because it was blocked to the height of two men and a third.

By Allah, my brother, our life is now very difficult, and all the people of Madeenah have repented. You can no longer hear the sound of any *rabaab* (a stringed instrument) or *daff* (drum) in the city, or anyone drinking. The fire continued to flow until it blocked part of Tareeq al-Ḥaajj and Baḥrat al-Ḥaajj, and some of it started to flow in the valley towards us, and we were scared that it would reach us. The people gathered and went to the Prophet (ﷺ) (to his grave), and they all repented there on Friday night. The flame of the lava that was flowing near us was extinguished by the decree of Allah, but up until now it has not lessened but it is still throwing forth stones the size of camels. It is rumbling and does not let us sleep or eat or drink. I cannot describe to you how frightening it is or the terrors that it contains.

I saw the people of Yanbu' who had sent their Qaaḍi, Ibn As'ad. He came rushing to see it, and he could not describe it because it is so terrifying. He wrote a letter on the fifth of *Rajab*, and the fire was still as it was. The people are scared of it, and the sun and moon do not rise except they seem to be eclipsed. We ask Allah to keep us safe and sound."

Abu Shaamah said: In Damascus we saw the effects of that eclipse in the weakness of its light shining on the walls. We were wondering what that was, until news reached us of this fire.

I (Ibn Katheer) say: Abu Shaamah had recorded that before the letters came with news of this fire. He said: On that night, Monday the sixteenth of *Jumaada al-Aakhirah*, the moon was eclipsed during the first part of the night. It was a deep red, then it cleared. The sun was also eclipsed, and in the morning it turned red at the time of rising and setting. It stayed like that for several days, changing its colour and lacking in light. And Allah is Able to do all things. Then he said: thus was made clear what ash-Shaafa'i had mentioned when he discussed an eclipse and *'eid* occurring at the same time, which the astronomers thought very unlikely.

Then Abu Shaamah said: "From another letter from one of Banu al-Faashaani in Madeenah, who says: In *Jumaada al-Aakhirah* some people from 'Iraq came to us and told us that there had been a great flood in Baghdad. The water had reached the tops of the walls of Baghdad, and a large part of the city was flooded. The water entered the middle of the city, the *Daar al-Khilaafah* (the capital administration) and the palace of the *wazeer* (minister) and three hundred and eighty houses were flooded. The treasury of the *khaleefah* (the caliph) was also flooded, and a large part of his armoury had been destroyed. The people were very close to being destroyed. Boats had started to enter the middle of the city, passing through the streets of Baghdad.

As for us, a major event has occurred among us, On the night of Wednesday, the third of *Jumaada al-Aakhirah*, and for two days beforehand, the people started to hear a sound like the sound of thunder, which frightened all the people. They awoke from their sleep and started to pray to Allah for forgiveness. They hastened to the mosque and prayed there, and it kept shaking with them hour after

hour, until the morning. That continued all day on Wednesday, and on Thursday night and Friday night. On Friday the earth started to shake so violently that the minarets of the mosque were shaking, and the roof of the mosque was heard creaking loudly. The people were scared because of their sins. The earthquake subsided on Friday morning, before noon.

Then there appeared in the harrah behind Qurayẓah on the road of al-Sawaariqiyyah a huge fire which burst forth from the earth and flowed from morning until noon. The people were utterly terrified of it. Then there appeared smoke which billowed up into the sky until it looked like white clouds, and it remained there until just before sunset on Friday. Then there appeared fire with tongues reaching up the sky, red and huge like fortresses. The people fled to the mosque of the Prophet (ﷺ) and to his tomb, where they gathered around the tomb, bared their heads and confessed their sins. They beseeched Allah and sought His help by virtue of His Prophet (ﷺ). The people came to the mosque from every corner of the city, and the women and children came out of their houses. They all gathered and prayed sincerely to Allah. The redness of the fire covered the entire sky, as if the people were in the light of the moon, and the sky remained (the colour of) a blood clot. The people were certain that they would be destroyed and punished. They spent that whole night praying, reading Qur'an, bowing and prostrating, praying to Allah, repenting from their sins and seeking Allah's forgiveness. The fire stayed where it was then it started to decrease in intensity and size.

The *faqeeh* and the Qaaḍi went to the governor to advise him, so he abolished the excise duties and freed all his slaves, and he restored to us and to others all the property that he had taken. That fire remained as it was, with its burning flames. It was as high as a mountain and as broad as a city, and it shot forth rocks into the sky which flew up then plummeted down. It threw forth huge mountains of fire (with a sound

like) thunder. It remained like that for several days, then it started flowing towards the valley of Ajeeleen, then along that valley to ash-Shaẓaa, until it reached Baḥrat al-Ḥaajj. It carried rocks along with it, until it almost approached Ḥarrat al-'Areeḍ. Then it stopped for a few days, then it started to throw forth rocks behind it and in front of it. Then it formed two mountains, and a "tongue" came forth from between the two mountains for several days. Then it became large and is still burning brightly up till now, burning more brightly than ever. Every day it makes a loud noise from the end of the night until mid-morning. There are many strange and wondrous things about it that I cannot describe fully to you. It is sufficient to tell you that the sun and the moon look as if they are eclipsed until now. This letter was written a month ago, and it is still where it was, neither advancing nor retreating."

I say: The hadith which speaks of this fire is narrated in *aṣ-Saḥeeḥayn* (Bukhari and Muslim) via *az-Zuhri* from Sa'eed ibn al-Muṣaayib from Abu Hurayrah, who said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not come until fire comes out of the land of Ḥijaaz which will illuminate the necks of the camels in Buṣra." This version is narrated by Bukhari.

This happened in this year - 654 AH - as we have mentioned. The chief Qaaḍi, Sadr ad-Deen 'Ali ibn Abil-Qaasim at-Tameemi al-Ḥanafi, the judge of Damascus, told me, whilst we were discussing this hadith and this fire which happened in this year, "I heard a Bedouin telling my father in Buṣra about those nights, when they saw the necks of their camels in the light of that fire which had appeared in the land of al-Ḥijaaz."

I say: He was born in 642 AH, and his father was a teacher of the Ḥanafi school of *fiqh* in Buṣra, as was his grandfather. He also taught there, then he moved to Damascus and taught in as-Saadiriyyah and

al-Ma'damiyyah, then he was appointed as chief Qaaḍi of the Ḥanafi school, and he was known for issuing good judgements and rulings. When this fire happened in the Ḥijaaz, he was twelve years old, and a boy of that age could listen and understand and remember precisely what was said by the Bedouin when he told his father about those nights. May the blessings and peace of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad and all his family and companions.

Some of the poets composed verses about the fire in the Ḥijaaz and the floods in Baghdad, for example:

"Glory be to the One Whose will has come to pass in His creation in the most complete and precise manner,

Baghdad has been flooded with water whilst the land of the Ḥijaaz has been burnt with fire."

Abu Shaamah said: the correct thing to say is:

"In one year He flooded Iraq and burnt the land of the Ḥijaaz with fire."

Ibn as-Saa'i said in his history of the year 654 AH: on Friday the eighteenth of *Rajab* - i.e. of this year - I was sitting with the *wazeer* (minister) when he received a letter from the city of the Messenger (ﷺ) (Madeenah), which was brought by a traveller known by the name of Qeemaaz al-'Alawi al-Ḥasani al-Madani. He gave the letter to him and he read it. The letter said that the city of the Messenger (ﷺ) had been shaken by an earthquake on Tuesday the second of *Jumaada al-Aakhirah*; the grave of the Prophet (ﷺ) had been shaken and the sound of the iron in it had been heard, and the chains had shaken. Fire had appeared at a distance of four parasangs (12 miles) from Madeenah, and it was throwing forth liquid like the tops of mountains. This had lasted for fifteen days.

This traveller said: I came and it had not stopped yet. It was still as it was. I asked him, in which direction is it throwing (that liquid)? He said, towards the east. So I walked past it with a group of people from Yemen. We threw a palm-leaf into it and it did not burn, but the fire was burning rocks and melting them. This Qeemaaz took out a piece of the burned rock and it was like coal in its colour and light weight.

He said, and it was mentioned in the letter, which was in the handwriting of the Qaaḍi of Madeenah, that when the earthquake happened, they went into the mosque, uncovered their heads and prayed for forgiveness. The governor of Madeenah freed all his slaves and gave back all that had been wrongfully seized. They kept on praying for forgiveness until the earthquake subsided, but the fire which had appeared did not cease. This traveller came when it had been burning for fifteen days and was still burning.

Ibn as-Saa'i said: I read in the handwriting of the trustworthy man Maḥmood ibn Yoosuf al-Am'aani, the Shaykh of the sanctuary of Madeenah, may the best of blessings and peace be upon its inhabitants, that he said: This fire which has appeared in the Ḥijaaz is a mighty sign, a sound indication that the Hour is at hand. The blessed one is the one who seizes the opportunity before death comes and hastens to reform himself and "make his peace" with Allah before death comes. This fire is in a land where there are no trees or vegetation, and parts of it consume other parts if it finds nothing else to consume. It burns stones and melts them so that they become like wet mud, then when the air comes into contact with them they become like the dross of iron which comes forth from the bellows. May Allah make it a lesson for the Muslims and a mercy to the world, by the virtue of Muhammad and his pure family.

This is the end of the quotation from Ibn Katheer.[12]

Among the great scholars who were alive at the time when this fire appeared was Imam an-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him). He mentioned it in his commentary on Muslim, where he says: "In our time a fire appeared in Madeenah, in 654 AH. It was an immense fire on the eastern side of Madeenah, behind the harrah. Knowledge of its emergence is widely known (*mutawaatir*) throughout ash-Shaam (Greater Syria - present day Syria, Jordan, Palestine) and all the lands, and people of Madeenah who witnessed it have told me about it."[13]

It is clear from the descriptions given by witnesses who saw this fire that it was a huge volcano, accompanied by great earthquakes. The point here is that this fire appeared as described by the one who told us about it, the most truthful one (ﷺ).

4 - The *Jizyah* and *Kharaaj* will no Longer be Collected

The *jizyah* which was paid by *Ahl adh-Dhimmah* (Jews and Christians living under Islamic rule) to the Muslim state, and the *khiraaj* which was paid by those who made use of the lands which had been conquered by the Muslim state, were among the most important sources of income for the *Bayt al-Maal* (treasury) of the Muslims. The Messenger (ﷺ) told us that this would come to a halt, and that because of this the Muslims would lose one of their main sources of income. In Muslim it is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Iraq will withhold its *dirhams* and *qafeez*, Syria will withhold its *madd* and *dinars*, and Egypt will withhold its *irdab* and

[12] *Al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah*, 13/187-192

[13] *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/28

> *dinars*. You will go back to where you started, you will go back to where you started.'" The flesh and blood of Abu Hurayrah testified to that.[14]

The *qafeez*, *madd* and *irdab* were weights and measures used by the people of that time in those lands. Some of them are known even nowadays. The *dirham* and *dinar* were the names of the currencies known at that time. These lands will withhold the things mentioned in the hadith because they were taken over by the *kuffaar* at various times. First the Romans, then the Tartars, took over a large portion of the Muslims' lands. In our own times the *kuffaar* have taken over the Muslims' lands, abolished the *khilaafah* (caliphate) and done away with the rule of Islamic shari'ah. An-Nawawi said in his commentary on this hadith: "The most correct meaning is that the Persians and Romans will take over the land at the end of time, and they will deprive the Muslims of this source of income. A few pages later, Muslim narrated this from Jaabir who said: 'Soon you will not receive any *qafeez* or *dirham*.' We said, 'Where from?' He said, 'From the Persians, who will withhold it.' And he also mentioned that the Romans would prevent that in Syria too. This is happening now in 'Iraq... It is said that it is because they will turn apostate at the end of time, so they will withhold their *zakaah* etc. Or it was said that the *kuffaar* who are obliged to pay *jizyah* will become strong enough at the end of time, so they will withhold the *jizyah* and *khiraaj* etc., that they used to pay."[15]

All of the reasons which an-Nawawi gave to explain why this income would be withheld from the Islamic state have happened, in addition to the collapse of the Islamic state whose economy was based on shari'ah. And it is to Allah that we complain.

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[14] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan*, 4/2220, hadith no. 2896

[15] *Sharh an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/20

CHAPTER THREE

THE SIGNS WHICH HAVE OCCURRED AND ARE ONGOING, OR WHICH OCCURRED ONCE AND MAY BE REPEATED

1 - Conquests and Wars

Allah sent His Messenger with guidance and the true religion so that it might prevail over all other religions. The bearers of this religion marched forth to the east and the west, conquering countries and spreading Islam. They defeated the greatest powers of that time and wiped them out, and this is what the Muslims continued to do down the ages and will continue to do until the last people of this ummah fight the *Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ).

The Messenger (ﷺ) told his Companions of the conquests and victories that were to come, which Allah would bring about at their hands or at the hands of those who would come after them. He told them that at the time when they were weak and oppressed in Makkah, and when they were being besieged in Madeenah, living under constant fear of an enemy attack. Bukhari narrated that Khabbaab ibn al-Aratt said: "We complained to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), whilst he was reclining on his cloak in the shade of the Ka'bah. We said to him, 'Why do you not pray for our victory, why do you not make supplication for us?' He said,

> "A hole was dug for a man before you. He was put in that hole, they then brought a saw and put it on his head, and cut him in two, but that did not make him abandon his religion. One was combed with iron comb, flesh was turn out of his bones, but

> that did not make him abandon his religion. By Allah, Allah (ﷻ) will complete this matter (Islam) and the day is at hand when a rider travelling from San'aa' to Haḍramawt will fear nothing except Allah, or (the fear) that the wolf may attack his sheep, but you are impatient."[1]

Safety and security was non-existent in the Arabian Peninsula, and the "law of the jungle" prevailed. Many *aḥaadeeth* (of the earlier days) stated that there would be security in the Arabian Peninsula because of the rise of Islam there. The Messenger (ﷺ) also told us that Islam would go beyond the borders of the Arabian Peninsula and that it would destroy the great empires of that era, such as the dominions of Chosroes and Caesar. In the Muslim it is narrated from Naafi' ibn 'Utbah that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say:

> "You will attack the Arabian Peninsula and Allah will enable you to conquer it, then Persia, and Allah will enable you to conquer it, then you will attack Rome and Allah will enable you to conquer it, then you will attack the *Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ) and Allah will enable you to defeat him."[2]

Bukhari narrated that 'Adiyy ibn Ḥaatim said: "Whilst I was with the Prophet (ﷺ), a man came to him and complained about poverty, then another man came to him and complained to him about banditry on the highways. He said, 'O' 'Adiyy, have you seen (the city of) Al-Ḥeerah?' I said, 'I have not seen it, but I have heard of it.' He said, 'If you live a long life, you will see a woman travelling in a litter on a camel's back, coming from Al-Ḥeerah to perform *Ṭawaaf* around the Ka'bah, fearing no one except Allah.' I wondered to myself, what

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[1] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Manaaqib*, hadith no. 3612, *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 7/619

[2] Muslim, *Kitaab al Fitan, Baab ma yakoon min Futooḥaat al Muslimeen qabl ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2225, hadith no. 2900

about the bandits of Tayy' who are spreading mischief throughout the land? [The Prophet (ﷺ) said,] 'And if you live a long life, you will acquire the treasure of Chosroes.' I said, 'Chosroes the son of Hormuz?' He said, '(Yes) Chosroes the son of Hormuz. And if you live a long life, you will see a man bringing out a handful of gold or silver, looking for someone to accept it from him, but he will not find anyone to accept it from him. Then one of you will meet Allah on the day when he meets Him, and there will be no interpreter between him and Allah. He will say, 'Did I not send to you a Messenger who conveyed the message?' He will say, 'Indeed.' He will say, 'Did I not give you wealth and bestow My bounty upon you?' He will say, 'Indeed.' Then he will look to his right and see nothing but Hell, and he will look to his left and see nothing but Hell.'" 'Adiyy said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

> 'Save yourselves from the Fire even if it is with only half a date (given in charity), and whoever does not have half a date, then (let him say) a good word.'"

'Adiyy said: "I saw a woman travelling in a litter on a camel's back, coming from Al-Heerah to perform *Tawaaf* around the Ka'bah, fearing no one except Allah, and I was among those who acquired the treasure of Chosroes ibn Hormuz, and if you live a long life you will see what the Prophet Abul-Qaasim spoke of, a man coming out with a handful of..."[3]

In another hadith, the Messenger (ﷺ) said that the Muslims would destroy the dominion of Chosroes and Caesar, and that they would spend their treasure for the sake of Allah.

In Bukhari it is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

[3] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Manaaqib*, hadith no. 3595, *Fath al-Baari*, 6/610

> 'When Chosroes is destroyed, there will be no Chosroes after him, and when Caesar is destroyed, there will be no Caesar after him. By the One in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, you will spend their treasure for the sake of Allah.'"[4]

In Muslim it is narrated that Thawbaan said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Allah showed me the earth, and I saw the east and the west. The dominion of my ummah will reach as far as all that I was shown. I have been given two treasures, the red and the white.'"[5]

And it happened as the Messenger (ﷺ) said, the dominion of this ummah reached as far as he had been shown of the earth, and most of the spread of this ummah was towards the east and the west; its expansion towards the north and south was little in comparison with its expansion towards the east and the west.

And our Messenger (ﷺ) told us that we would conquer India. According to the *saheeh* hadith narrated by Thawbaan (رضي الله عنه), the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "Two groups of my ummah will be saved by Allah from the Fire: the group which conquers India and the group which will be with 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam (عليه السلام)."[6]

The Messenger (ﷺ) gave us the glad tidings of the conquest of Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, and he also

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[4] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Manaaqib*, hadith no. 3618, *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 6/625

[5] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Halaak hadhihil-ummah ba'ḍuhum bi ba'ḍ*, 4/2215, no. 2889

[6] This hadith is narrated by Nasaa'i, Aḥmad and others. Its isnad is *qawiy*. See *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah* by Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani, 4/570, hadith no. 1934

told us of the conquest of Rome, the seat of the Vatican. According to a *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith, Abu Qubayl said, "We were with 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aaṣ (ﷺ), and he was asked which of the two cities would be conquered first, Constantinople or Rome? 'Abdullah called for a box that had rings, and took a letter out of it. He said: 'Whilst we were with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), we would write things down. When he was asked which of these two cities would be conquered first, Constantinople or Rome, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The city of Heraclius will be conquered first", meaning Constantinople.'"[7]

The Persians and Romans were conquered, and the dominion of Chosroes and Caesar was destroyed. The Muslims conquered India and Constantinople. In the future the Muslims will have great power by which they will spread Islam and defeat *shirk*, and they will conquer Rome in fulfilment of the hadith of the Messenger (ﷺ) who said,

> "This matter (Islam) will reach as far as night and day reach, and Allah will not leave any house or tent but He will cause this religion to enter it. Some will be honoured and others will be humiliated, Allah will honour Islam and humiliate *kufr*."[8]

The Messenger (ﷺ) said that we would fight the Turks. In Bukhari and Muslim it is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) related: The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "One of the signs of the Hour will be that you will fight a people who wear shoes made from hair, and one of the signs of

[7] Narrated by Aḥmad, Ad-Daarimi, Abu Shaybah and Al-Ḥaakim. The latter classed it as *ṣaḥeeḥ* and Ad-Dhahabi agreed with him. See *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 1/8, hadith no. 4

[8] Narrated by Ibn Ḥibbaan in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*, by Ibn 'Uroobah in *Al-Muntaqaa min aṭ-Ṭabaqaat* and by Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani in *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 1/7, hadith no. 3

> the Hour will be that you will fight a people with wide faces like flattened shields."

According to another version narrated from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ):

> "The Hour will not come until you fight the Turks, who have small eyes, red faces and flat noses, as if their faces are flattened shields. The Hour will not come until you fight a people whose shoes are of hair." This version is narrated by Bukhari.[9]

This happened as the Messenger (ﷺ) described. The Muslims did indeed fight the Turks more than once. An-Nawawi said concerning the Tartars who attacked the Muslim world: "And they were seen in our times, i.e., the Turks of whom the Messenger (ﷺ) spoke... they have all the attributes which he (ﷺ) mentioned: small eyes, red faces, flat noses and wide faces, as if their faces are flattened shields. They wear shoes made of hair. They have been seen with all these attributes in our own time. They fought the Muslims on (many) occasions, and they are fighting them now. We ask Allah to make the end good for the Muslims in this matter and in others, and in all their circumstances. May He always be kind to them and protect them. And may Allah bless and grant peace to His Messenger who did not speak of his own desires, rather it was revelation which was revealed to him."[10]

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[9] Bukhari in *Kitaab al-Jihaad, Baab Kitaab at-Turk, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 6/103. Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan*, 4/2233, hadith no. 2912

[10] *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim* (18/38). It is clear that An-Nawawi was moved by the predictions of the Messenger (ﷺ), because he was writing his commentary on this hadith whilst the battle was raging between the Muslims and these people whom the Messenger (ﷺ) had said that the Muslims would fight. He saw their features with his own eyes.

2 - Emergence of Imposters (*Dajjaals*) Who Would Claim to be Prophets

The Messenger (ﷺ) said that there would emerge imposters [*Dajjaals* (Pseudo-Christ)] among this ummah who would claim to be Prophets. The Messenger (ﷺ) stated that they would number nearly thirty; in some *aḥaadeeth* the number is given as twenty-nine. Those who are included in this number are those who claim to be Prophets and stir up trouble and *fitnah*, and influence people so that they follow them and are deceived by their falsehood. But those who make such claims and are ignored by the people are many.

In Bukhari and Muslim it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not come until nearly thirty liars (*Dajjaals*) have been sent, each of whom will claim to be a messenger of Allah."[11]

In Muslim it is narrated that Thawbaan said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "There will be thirty *Dajjaals* among my ummah, each of whom will claim that he is a Prophet, but I am the Seal of the Prophets, there will be no Prophet after me."[12]

In *Musnad Aḥmad*, *Mushkil al-Aathaar* by aṭ-Ṭaḥḥaawia, *Mu'jam aṭ-Ṭabaraani al-Kabeer* and *Mu'jam aṭ-Ṭabaraani al-Awsaṭ* it is narrated with a *ṣaheeḥ* isnad from Ḥudhayfah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Among my ummah will be liars and twenty-seven *Dajjaals*, including four women. But I am the Seal of the Prophets, there will be no Prophet after me."[13]

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[11] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/81

[12] Muslim, see *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/404

[13] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaheeḥah*, 4/654, no. 1999

A large number of these liars did appear in the past. At the time of the *Ṣaḥaabah* (the Companions) there emerged Musaylimah al-Kadhdhaab (the liar), Al-Aswad al-'Ansi and Sajaaḥ al-Kaahinah. At the time of the *Taabi'een* (the followers of the Companions) there emerged Al-Mukhtaar al-Thaqafi who claimed to be a prophet. More than a century ago there was Ḥusayn ibn 'Ali ibn al-Mirza 'Abbaas in Iran, who claimed to be a prophet.[14] He was known as Baha'ullah and his followers are known as Baha'is. The latest claimant to Prophethood that we have heard of is Maḥmood Muḥammad Ṭa-Ha as-Sudani who misled many people with his writings and articles. He was executed at the beginning of the year 1985 CE by the Sudanese government because of his misguidance, *kufr* and apostasy[15]. May the curse of Allah be upon the wrongdoers. But the great *Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ) is the one who will emerge at the end of time, and Allah will send down 'Eesa ibn Maryam (Jesus son of Mary) to put an end to his *fitnah*.

3 - *Al-Fitan* (Tribulations, Turmoil)

(1) Warning of tribulation (*fitan*)

The righteous man is the Muslim who adheres firmly to the religion revealed by Allah, and the righteous nation is the nation which

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[14] He was born in Tehran in 1233 AH, and died in 'Akka (Acre) in Palestine in 1309 AH.

[15] Among the claimants of Prophethood in South Asia is Mirza Ghulam Aḥmad of Qadiyan, Punjab, India. His followers are known as Qadiyanees and Aḥmadis. They were nourished and patronized by the British Empire. Their headquarters happened to be at Rabwah, Punjab, Pakistan. Besides the *ijmaa* of the Muslim jurists, the National Assembly of Pakistan (and also the Supreme Court) branded them out of the pale of Islam - *kaafir*. Qadiyanis/Aḥmadis consider all the Muslims who do not accept Mirza Ghulam Aḥmad as Prophet to be *kaafir*, and of illegitimate birth. (IIPH)

accepts this religion and adheres to it. Both the Muslim individual and the Muslim ummah will be tested with various kinds of trials. Trials may be stirred up within the ummah by whims and desires, division and dispute, or they may come from the enemies of this ummah who conquer and humiliate it. The trials that stem from divisions and disputes may reach such an extent that Muslims draw swords against one another, and people are killed, blood is shed, sanctities are violated and wealth is stolen. Allah told His Messenger (ﷺ) about many of the trials and tribulations with which the Muslim ummah would be tested in the future, hence the Messenger (ﷺ) spoke at length to his companions about those tribulations and explained the way out of them. Abu Zayd 'Amr ibn Akhṭab said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) led the *Fajr* prayer, he then ascended the *minbar* (pulpit) and addressed us until the time for *Ẓuhr* came. Then he came down and prayed, then he ascended the *minbar* and addressed us until the time for *'Aṣr* came. Then he ascended the *minbar* and addressed us until the sun set. He told us of what was to come, and the most learned among us is the one who remembers them best."[16]

Perhaps this day was the same as that mentioned by Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamaan, from whom it is narrated that he said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stood up among us and he did not leave out anything that is to happen until the Hour begins, but he told us about it. Those who memorized it, memorized it and those who forgot it, forgot it. These companions of mine know them, and there are some things which slip my mind, but when they happen, I recognize them just as a man remembers the face of a man who has been away from him, but when he sees him, he recognizes him."[17]

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[16] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan*, Baab *ikhbaar an-Nabi fimaa yakoon ila Qiyaam as-Saa'ah*, 4/2217, no. 2892

[17] Opt. cit.

Some of these tribulations are intense and difficult, and others are light. According to the hadith of Ḥudhayfah narrated in Muslim about the tribulations, "Among them (i.e., the tribulations) will be three which will almost destroy everything, and among them will be some which are like summer breezes. Some of them will be minor and some will be major."[18]

The severity of these *fitan* may be so great that a Muslim will abandon his religion. According to a hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ), the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Hasten to do good deeds before tribulations come like patches of dark night, where a man will be a believer in the morning and will be a *kaafir* by evening, or he will be a believer in the evening and a *kaafir* by morning, and one of you will sell his religion for some trifling worldly gain." (Aḥmad, Muslim and Tirmidhi).[19]

According to the hadith of Anas ibn Maalik (ﷺ), the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "Just before the Hour there will be tribulations like patches of dark night, where a man will be a believer in the morning and a *kaafir* by evening, or he will be a believer in the evening and a *kaafir* by morning, and some people will sell their religion for a trifling worldly gain." This has been recorded by Tirmidhi in his *Sunan*, and he said, (it is) a *ṣaḥeeḥ ḥasan hadith*.[20]

These tribulations will weigh so heavily on the Muslim and will be so intense that he will wish to die so that he might escape these

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[18] Muslim, *Kitaab al Fitan, Baab Ikhbaar an Nabi fimaa yakoon ila Qiyaam as-Saa'ah*, 4/2216, no. 2891

[19] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 3/4

[20] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/383

tribulations. It is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not come until a man passes by a man's grave and says, 'Would that I were in his place." (Bukhari and Muslim).[21]

According to a report by Muslim [the Prophet (ﷺ) said],

> "By the One in Whose hand is my soul, this world will not end until a man passes by a grave and throws himself down upon it and says, 'Would that I were in the place of the occupant of this grave,' not because of debt but because of the calamity."[22]

One of the main reasons why tribulations and calamities happen is the lack of knowledge and the prevalence of ignorance, abandoning Islam, committing sins and acts of disobedience, and violating sanctities. It is narrated that 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood and Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (may Allah be pleased with them both) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Just before the Hour comes there will be days when ignorance will prevail and knowledge will be taken away, and there will be much *haraj*, and *haraj* means killing." (Bukhari and Muslim).[23]

It is narrated that Anas (ﷺ) said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

> 'Among the signs of the Hour are that knowledge will be taken away, ignorance will be widespread, *zinaa* and wine-drinking

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[21] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab la taqoom as-Saa'ah hatta yughbaṭa ahl al-qaboor, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/75. Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab la taqoom as-Saa'ah ḥatta yamurr ar-rajul bi qabr ir-rajul...*, 4/2231

[22] Muslim, *ibid.*

[23] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 11/408, no. 7924

> will be widespread, men will be few and women will be many, to the extent that for fifty women there will be only one man to look after them." According to another report, "Knowledge will decrease and ignorance will prevail." (Bukhari and Muslim)[24]

The reason why there will be so few men and so many women is explained in some *aḥaadeeth* - it will be because of the wars which will happen at that time. In many *aḥaadeeth* the Messenger (ﷺ) speaks of how much killing there will be at the end of time; this does not refer to the Muslims killing the *kuffaar*, but to the Muslims killing one another. In many cases the reasons or purpose for that killing will not be known. According to a hadith narrated from Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Just before the Hour, there will be *haraj*." They said, "What is *haraj*?" He said, "Killing, but it will not be that you will kill the *mushrikeen*, rather you will be killing one another, [until a man will kill his neighbour, or his brother, or his (paternal) uncle, or his cousin]." They said, "Will we be in our senses at that time?" He said,

> "Reason will have been taken away from the people of that time, and the people will be feeble minded. Most of them will think that they are following something when in fact they will not be following anything."[25]

Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) narrated that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

> "By the One in Whose hand is my soul, there will come a time when the killer will not know why he killed, and his victim will not know why he was killed."[26]

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[24] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 3/21

[25] Aḥmad with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad, see *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah* by Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani, 4/248

[26] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab la taqoom as-Saa'aah ḥatta yamurr rajul bi qabri rajul...*, 2/2231, no. 2908

(2) Examples of tribulations

(i) The murder of the Rightly-Guided *Khaleefah* 'Uthmaan and the division of the Ummah

One of the greatest tribulations of which the Messenger (ﷺ) spoke was that which led to the murder of the Rightly-Guided *Khaleefah* 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan, and the division of the Muslim ummah. From then on, Allah caused the ummah to turn against itself. So they drew swords against one another, and innocent blood was shed on both sides of this conflict between Muslims. The most correct description of this *fitnah* was that it was like the mounting waves of the sea. Ḥudhayfah narrated that he was sitting with 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭaab (ﷺ), who said, "Who among you remembers what the Prophet (ﷺ) said about tribulation?" Ḥudhayfah said: "A man will face tribulation with regard to his family, his wealth and his children, for which expiation will be made by his praying, giving in charity, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil. 'Umar said, "This is not what I was asking about, rather about the one that will be like the mounting waves of the sea." Ḥudhayfah said, "Do not worry about that, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, for there is a closed door between you and that." 'Umar said, "Will it be broken or opened?" He said, "It will be broken." 'Umar said, "Then it will never be closed again." I said, "Yes." We said to Ḥudhayfah, "Did 'Umar know what the door was?" He said, "Yes, he knew it just as one knows that the night precedes the morrow, and I narrated to him a hadith in which nothing was wrong." We wanted to ask him about the door, and we told Masrooq to ask him. He said, "Who is the door?" He said, "Umar."[27]

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[27] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab al-Fitnah allati tamooj ka mawj al-Baḥr, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/48. Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan*, Baab *al-Fitnah allati tamooj ka mawj al-baḥr*, 4/2218. This version is narrated by Bukhari.

The Prophet (ﷺ) demarcated the years in which this *fitnah* would happen. According to the hadith of 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The millstone of Islam will start to rotate after thirty-five years, then if they perish they will have followed the path of those who perished before them, and if their religion is maintained, it will be maintained for seventy years."

I said (according to another report, 'Umar said, "O' Prophet of Allah), Does it mean seventy years which remain or seventy years which have already gone by?" He said, "(Seventy years) which have already gone by."[28] It was called the millstone of Islam, likening war to a millstone, because it crushes the fighters as the millstone crushes grain. In the rest of the hadith, the Messenger (ﷺ) referred to how long Banu Umayyah (the *Umayyads*) would hold power, because their reign lasted for seventy years.

Some reports clearly describe what the state of the ummah will be when that tribulation comes. According to the hadith of Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ), the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not come until two large groups fight one another, and there will be a great deal of killing, but their claim will be the same."[29]

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[28] A *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith narrated by Abu Dawood, by Aṭ-Ṭaḥaawi in *Mushkil al-Aathaar*, Al-Ḥaakim, Aḥmad and others. It is classed as *ṣaḥeeḥ* by Al-Ḥaakim, and Adh-Dhahabi agreed with him. See *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah* by Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani, 2/703, no. 976

[29] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Manaaqib*, hadith no. 3608, 3609, *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 6/516. Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitnah, Baab idha tawaajaha al-Muslimaan bi sayfayhimaa*, 4/2214. This version is narrated by Muslim.

(ii) The *fitnah* of the *Khawaarij*

Among the effects of tribulation are division and differences. The Messenger told us that there would emerge people at the end of time who would play a major role in dividing the Muslim ummah. They will claim to have knowledge, will strive in worship and will call people to the Book of Allah, but they will be ignorant, their rulings will be unfair and their opinions will be lacking. They will shed the blood of their opponents among the Muslims, and they will describe the *Sahaabah* and scholars as ignorant. According to a hadith whose authenticity is agreed upon by Bukhari and Muslim, 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (ﷺ) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'At the end of time there will emerge people who will be young and foolish. They will speak as if they are the best of creation and they will recite the Qur'an, but it will not go any deeper than their throats. They will pass through the religion as (swiftly as) an arrow passes through its prey. If you meet them, kill them, for in killing them there will be reward with Allah on the Day of Resurrection.'"[30]

In *Sunan Abi Dawood, Sunan ibn Maajah, Mustadrak al-Haakim* and *Musnad Ahmad* it is narrated that Anas (ﷺ) related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'There will be differences and divisions among my ummah. There will be people who will speak well but behave badly. They will recite the Qur'an but it will not go any deeper than their collar-bones. They will pass through the religion as (swiftly as) an arrow passes through its prey, and they will not come back until the arrow comes back to the bow (i.e., never). They are the most evil of people and of creation. Glad tidings

[30] *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 3/213

to the one who kills them and they kill him. They will call people to the Book of Allah, but they will have nothing to do with it. Whoever fights them is closer to Allah than them, and their sign is that they shave their heads.'"[31]

This group appeared at the time of the *Ṣaḥaabah*. They denounced the *Ṣaḥaabah* as *kaafirs* and shed the blood of the Muslims, and they caused great tribulation in the ummah.

(3) How to save oneself from tribulation

Many of the *Ṣaḥaabah* tried to find out about the tribulations that would befall this ummah, and to learn the way to save themselves from them. Among these *Ṣaḥaabah*, Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamaan was in the foremost. It is narrated in a *ṣaḥeeḥ* report that he said: "I am the most knowledgeable of people about every tribulation that will come to pass between me and the Hour."[32]

Ḥudhayfah used to ask the Messenger (ﷺ) a great deal about tribulations so that he would not fall prey to them. In Bukhari it is narrated that Ḥudhayfah said: "The people used to ask the Messenger of Allah about good things, but I used to ask him about bad things, for fear that they might catch up with me. I said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, we were in *jaahiliyyah* (ignorance) and evil, then Allah brought this good (Islam) to us. Will there be any evil after this good?' He said, 'Yes.' I said, 'And after that evil will there be any good?' He said, 'Yes, but it will be tainted with *dakhan* (a little evil).' I said, 'What will its *dakhan* be?' He said, 'There will be people who guide others with something other than my guidance. You will approve of some of their actions and disapprove of others.' I said,

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[31] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'*, 3/217

[32] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Ikhbaar ar-Rasool fimaa takoon ila Qiyaam as-Sa'aah*, 4/2216, no. 2891

'Will there be any evil after that good?' He said, 'Yes, there will be callers at the gates of Hell, and whoever responds to their call will be thrown into it.' I said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, describe them to us.' He said, 'They will be of us and they will speak our language.' I said, 'What do you command me to do if that should happen in my lifetime?' He said, 'Adhere to the *jamaa'ah* of the Muslims and their *Imam* (leader).' I said, 'What if there is no *jamaa'ah* and no *Imam*?' He said, 'Then keep away from all those groups, even if you have to bite onto (eat) the root of a tree, until death catches up with you whilst you are in that state.'"[33]

According to the hadith of 'Irbaaḍ ibn Saariyah, the Messenger (ﷺ) enjoined adhering to Islam, obeying the Imam (leader), and adhering to the Sunnah of the Messenger (ﷺ) and the way of the *Khulafa' ar-Raashideen* after him. 'Abd ar-Raḥmaan ibn 'Amr al-Sulami narrated that he heard 'Irbaaḍ ibn Saariyah say: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) preached and gave us a far-reaching lesson to us which filled our eyes with tears and made our hearts tremble. We said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, this is the lesson of one who is bidding farewell, so what do you advise us?' He said, 'I have left you on a clear and bright path, whose night is as its day. No one will deviate from it after I am gone, but he will be doomed. Whoever among you lives after me will see a great deal of division. I urge you (to adhere to) my Sunnah and the way of the rightly guided *khulafa* (caliphs). Cling stubbornly to it, and I urge you to obey (authority), even if (the ruler is) an Abyssinian slave, for the believer is like an easy-going camel which goes wherever it is led.'"[34]

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[33] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Kayfa yakoon al-amr idha lam takun jamaa'ah. Fath al-Baari*, 13/35

[34] A *saheeh* hadith, narrated by Ibn Maajah, Tirmidhi and Aḥmad. See *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaheeḥah* by Al-Albaani, 2/647, hadith no. 937

How should the Muslim deal with wars that happen among Muslims?

The Messenger (ﷺ) taught his ummah how they should deal with tribulations of this kind which arise among Muslims where matters are confused and it is not clear who is in the right. The Messenger (ﷺ) advocated avoiding conflict and fighting in such situations, and retreating to a remote place where a man could tend sheep on the mountain tops, or strive against the enemy on the borders of the Islamic state. If the swords of the combatants reached him, the command was to refrain from self-defence even if that led to his death. Abu Bakrah narrated to us that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "There will be tribulations, then there will come a tribulation in which the one who is sitting will be better than the one who is walking, and the one who is walking will be better than the one who is striving. When that happens, let the one who has camels go and take care of his camels, and let the one who has sheep go and take care of his sheep, and whoever has land let him go and take care of his land.

A man said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, what do you think about one who has neither camels nor sheep nor land?' He said, 'Let him go to his sword and make it blunt, then let him escape if he can. O' Allah, have I conveyed (the message)? O' Allah, have I conveyed (the message)?' A man said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, what do you think if I am forced to join one of the two sides or one of the two groups, and a man strikes me with his sword, or an arrow comes and kills me?' He said, 'Then he will carry his own sin and your sin, and he will be one of the people of Hell.'"[35]

[35] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Nuzool al-Fitan*, 4/2212, no. 2887

It is narrated that Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Soon the best wealth that a Muslim may possess will be sheep, which he follows through the mountain passes to places where rain falls, fleeing for the sake of his religion from tribulations.'" (Bukhari).[36]

According to the hadith narrated by Al-Ḥaakim from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ), the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "Tribulations like patches of black night are approaching you. The people who will be most safe from them will be the one who lives in a high place and eats what his sheep produce, or the one who is always on the move, holding the reins of his horse, and eating from the booty that his spear earns him."[37]

The Messenger (ﷺ) explained to Abu Dharr how he should deal with tribulation. He told him:

"What do you think if the people kill one another until *Ḥajaarat al-Zayt* (a place in Madeenah) is filled with blood? What should you do? Stay in your house and lock the door." He said, "What if I am not left alone?" He said, "Go and join those whom you used to be with, and be one of them." He said, "Should I take my weapon with me?" He said, "You will be taking part if you do. But if you are afraid that you will be disturbed by the flashing of the swords, then put part of your garment over your face so that he will bear his own sin and your sin, and he will be one of the people of Hell."[38]

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[36] Bukhari, *Baab at-Ta'arrub fil-Fitnah, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/40

[37] Al-Ḥaakim; classed as *saheeh*, and Adh-Dhahabi agreed with him. See *Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 3/466, 4/642

[38] A *saheeh* hadith, narrated by Aḥmad, Abu Dawood, Ibn Ḥibbaan and Al-Ḥaakim. See *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/258

The *aḥaadeeth* which we have quoted above, and similar reports, were quoted as evidence by those among the *Ṣaḥaabah* who did not believe in fighting at times of tribulation. "They were all of those who refrained from fighting alongside 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭaalib in his wars, such as Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqaaṣ, 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, Muḥammad ibn Muslimah, Abu Bakrah and others. They said, 'We must refrain (from fighting), so that even if someone wants to kill us, we should not defend ourselves.' Others said, 'He should not take part in this tribulation, and if someone wants to kill us, we must defend ourselves. The majority of the *Ṣaḥaabah* and *Taabi'een* were of the view that it is obligatory to support the truth and fight those who are in the wrong. They interpreted the *aḥaadeeth* which were narrated concerning that as referring to the one who is not able to fight, or who is not able to find out who is in the right."[39]

Aṭ-Ṭabari said: "The root meaning of *fitnah* is trial or test. Denouncing evil is obligatory upon the one who is able to do so. Whoever supports the one who is in the right has done the right thing, and whoever supports the one who is in the wrong has erred. If the matter is not clear, then this is the situation in which the command not to fight applies."[40]

Undoubtedly, it is very difficult to find out who is right in such cases where there are tribulations and people are following their whims and desires. The safest course is to keep away and withdraw, so that the Muslim does not shed blood that it is forbidden for him to shed, and does not harm another Muslim. And Allah knows best.

(4) The focal point and source of tribulation

The Messenger (ﷺ) has told us of the direction from which the winds of tribulation will blow across the Muslim lands. In Bukhari, Muslim

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[39] *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/33

[40] *Ibid* 31

and Mu'waṭṭa' it is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The head of *kufr* is towards the east, pride and showing off exist among the people who keep horses and camels, and dignity exists among the people who keep sheep."[41]

It is narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar that the Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) stood beside the *minbar* and said: "Tribulation is there, where the horn of the *Shayṭaan* will emerge," or he said, "The horn of the sun." This is narrated by Bukhari and Muslim. According to a report narrated by Muslim from 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ), "The head of *kufr* is there, where the horn of the *Shayṭaan* emerge."[42]

According to another hadith, Ibn 'Umar related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: 'O' Allah, bless our Syria; O' Allah, bless our Yemen.' They said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, and our Najd?' I think he said, when they repeated it for the third time, 'There are earthquakes and tribulations, and there the horn of the *Shayṭaan* will emerge.'"[43]

The original meaning of "an-Najd" is high ground. Al-Khaṭṭaabi said: "Najd is towards the east, so for whoever is in Madeenah, his Najd is the desert of 'Iraq and its surroundings. This is the east of the people of Madeenah. The original meaning of Najd is high ground, the opposite of low-lying land. Tihaamah is all low-lying ground, and Makkah is part of Tihaamah."[44]

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[41] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/61, hadith no. 7528

[42] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Qawl an-Nabi, "Al-fitnah min qibal ash-Sharq", Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/45. Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab al-Fitnah min al-Mashriq*, 4/2229, hadith no. 2905

[43] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Qawl an-Nabi, "Al-fitnah min qibal ash-sharq", Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/45

[44] *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/47

Undoubtedly 'Iraq is towards the east, and in relation to Madeenah it is counted as Najd. This is how it was understood by Saalim ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, and when the people of 'Iraq were committing major sins whilst asking about trivial matters, Saalim said to them, "O' people of 'Iraq, how often you ask about minor issues and how often you commit major sins! I heard my father say, 'I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

> "Tribulation will come from there," and he pointed towards the east, "From where the horn of the *Shaytaan* will emerge."' And you are killing one another."[45]

Whoever studies history will know that tribulations came to the Muslim ummah and the Islamic world from the east. From that direction came the tribulation which led to the murder of the Rightly-Guided *khaleefah* 'Uthmaan; from that direction came the deviant group known as *Al-Ḥarooriyyah* or the *Khawaarij*. The tribulation caused by the *Khawaarij* continued to affect the ummah throughout the Umawi (Umayyad) period. It was there that the Zanj insurgence took place in 255 AH in Baṣrah. In 278 AH the Qaraamitah (Carmathian) movement emerged from there. Anyone who studies the destruction wrought by the Zanj and Qaraamitah in the Muslim ummah will be stunned at the atrocities which they committed.

It was from the east that the Tartars came, and tribulation will continue to come from the east until the *Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ) comes from Khuraasaan as was foretold by the Messenger (ﷺ).

These *aḥaadeeth* - which describe the point from which tribulations will come to the Muslim ummah - do not contradict the hadith narrated from the Messenger (ﷺ) by Usaamah ibn Zayd (may Allah be pleased with them both), in which he says, "The Prophet (ﷺ)

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[45] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab al-Fitnah min al-Mashriq,* 4/2229, hadith no. 2905

looked out from one of the hills of Madeenah, and said, 'Do you see what I see?' They said, 'No.' He said, 'I can see tribulations falling among your houses like rain.'"[46] Bukari narrated it.[47]

Ibn Ḥajar says in his commentary on this hadith: "This applies specifically to Madeenah because the murder of the third Caliph 'Uthmaan (ﷺ) took place there, then the tribulations spread throughout the land after that. The battles of the Camel and Ṣiffeen took place because of the murder of 'Uthmaan, and the battle at an-Nahrawaan was fought because of the appointment of arbitrators from both sides at Ṣiffeen. All of the battles that were fought at that time were as a result of that, or the result of a chain of events set in motion by that. The main reason for the murder of 'Uthmaan was the criticism about his governors, criticism concerning appointing them by 'Uthmaan as such. The first happened in Iraq, which is towards the east. So there is no contradiction between the hadith quoted here and the hadith which says that tribulation will come from the east."[48]

4 - The Appointment of Unqualified People to Positions of Authority

"The right man in the right place" is one of the most important principles, without which human life cannot run smoothly. Hence the periods in which highly qualified people, who were also righteous

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[46] In this hadith the Messenger (ﷺ) was referring to the large number of tribulations which would affect the people at large and would not be restricted only to certain groups, just as rain affects all of the areas on which it falls. Whoever studies history and what happened after the murders of Caliph 'Uthmaan and Ḥusayn son of 'Ali, will know that what the Messenger (ﷺ) said was true.

[47] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Qawl an-Nabi 'Waylun lil-'Arab min sharr qad aqtarab', Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/11` Muslim, 4/2211. This version is narrated by Bukhari.

[48] *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/13

and pious, were appointed are considered as the golden ages in the history of the Muslim ummah. The fatal mistakes which lead to corruption in life are the appointment of unqualified people to positions of leadership and authority who direct the affairs of life according to their whims and desires, overlooking good people who would direct matters in the best way.

The Messenger (ﷺ) told us that among the signs of the Hour would be the appointment of non-deserving people (to positions of authority and leadership). Bukhari narrated that Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said: "Whilst the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was sitting in a gathering, speaking to the people, a Bedouin came along and said, 'When will the Hour come?' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) continued speaking, and some of the people thought, he has heard what he said, but he does not like what he said. Others thought, he (the Prophet) did not hear him. Then when he had finished speaking, he said, 'Where is the one who was asking about the Hour?' The man said, 'Here I am, O' Messenger of Allah.' He said, 'When (trust and) honesty is lost, watch for the Hour.' He said, 'How will it be lost?' He said, 'When unqualified people are appointed (to the positions of authority and leadeship), watch for the Hour.'"[49]

Aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiyyah narrated in *Mushkil al-Athaar* that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "Soon the world will be taken over by the wicked, the sons of the wicked..."[50]

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[49] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/396, hadith no. 7904

[50] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaheeḥah*, 4/9, hadith no. 1505. In the isnad of the *marfoo'* version of this hadith there is some weakness, but there is also a *mawqoof ṣaheeḥ* isnad for this hadith. The *mawqoof* in this case is similar to *marfoo'* in status.

Whoever studies Islamic history will see that the malady referred to by the Messenger (ﷺ) is one of the greatest trials that have befallen the Muslims. The affairs of this ummah are being controlled by tyrants and oppressors who cannot bear to hear any opinion which goes against their own. According to the hadith narrated by Mu'aawiyah, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "There will be Imams (leaders) after me who will speak and no one will refute them. They will rush into the Fire like monkeys." This has been narrated by Aṭ-Ṭabaraani in *Al-Kabeer* and *Al-Awṣat*, and also by Abu Ya'la.[51]

Some of these rulers will be distracted by their desires and pleasures from taking care of the Muslims' affairs. Some of them will not know the truth, so they will force people to do things with which they are not familiar, thus spreading *bid'ah* and evil among them. This is described in the hadith narrated by 'Ubaadah ibn Ṣaamit from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ):

> "There will be rulers who will be distracted by things. They will delay prayer from its proper time, so make your prayer with them as voluntary."[52] Abu Dawood, Aḥmad, and Ibn Maajah narrated it, and its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

According to the hadith of Umm Salamah narrated by Muslim and Abu Dawood: "There will be rulers some of whose behaviour you will find commendable and some reprehensible. Whoever hates (their behaviour) will be free from blame and whoever denounces (them) will be safe, but whoever accepts them and follows them will not be safe."[53]

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[51] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 4/398, no. 1790

[52] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 3/205

[53] Opt. cit.

Musnad Aḥmad, *Mu'jam aṭ-Ṭabaraani* and *Sunan ibn Maajah* narrated from Ibn Mas'ood that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

> "You will have rulers who will delay the prayer from its time and introduce innovations."

Ibn Mas'ood said, "What should I do? (in such circumstance)" He said, "Are you asking me, O' Ibn Umm 'Abd, what you should do? There is no obedience to one who disobeys Allah."[54]

We may note that the Messenger (ﷺ) did not grant permission to rebel against sinful rulers, because of the tribulation and bloodshed that may result from such a rebellion. This is the case if they (the sinful rulers) are applying the shari'ah of Allah in general.

Sunan an-Nasaa'i and *Musnad ibn Ḥibbaan* recorded a hadith with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from 'Arfajah: "After I am gone you will see things that are not sound. Whoever you see departing from the *jaama'ah* or wanting to create division in the ummah of Muhammad, no matter who he is, kill him, for the hand of Allah is with the *jamaa'ah*, and the *Shayṭaan* is running with the one who departs from the *jamaa'ah*."[55]

5 - The Corruption of the Muslims

The ummah achieves development and prominence commensurate with the number of righteous individuals in its ranks who embody noble values and praiseworthy characteristics, striving to establish justice in the real world, to straighten what is crooked and to reform the corrupt. These are the ones who bear the trust (*amaanah*) which the heavens and the earth refused to carry and were afraid of:

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[54] *Ibid*, 3/216

[55] *Ibid*, 3/206

﴿إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَن يَحْمِلْنَهَا
وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا ﴿٧٢﴾﴾

﴾Truly, We did offer *Al-Amaanah* [the trust or moral responsibility or honesty and all the duties which Allah has ordained] to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains, but they declined to bear it and were afraid of it [i.e. afraid of Allah's Torment]. But man bore it. Verily, he was unjust [to himself] and ignorant [of its results].﴿ *(Qur'an 33: 72)*

This *amaanah* is the faith and duties which Allah requires of His slaves, and includes fulfilling one's duties with regard to people's wealth and property. The Messenger (ﷺ) has told us that this *amaanah* will be taken away, and that this will happen gradually. At the time of Ḥudhayfah that could be detected to some extent, but in our time that has become widespread, and there will come a time when it will be even worse. Muslim narrated in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* that Ḥudhayfah (ﷺ) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) told us two things, one of which I have seen and I am still waiting for the other. He told us, 'The *amaanah* is deep-rooted in the heart of man, then the Qur'an was revealed and they learnt from the Qur'an and they learnt from the Sunnah.' Then he told us about the removal of *amaanah* and said, 'A man would sleep for a while and the *amaanah* would be removed from his heart, leaving the impression of a faint mark. Then he would sleep again, and the *amaanah* would be removed from his heart, leaving the impression of a blister, as if you had rolled an ember on your foot and it had made a mark, leaving a swelling with nothing in it.' Then he took a pebble and rolled it on his foot, and (said): 'The people will enter into transactions with one another, and there would hardly be anyone who will return things that had been entrusted to him, until it would be said, In such-and-such a tribe there

is a trustworthy man, and it would be said of a man, how prudent he is, how broad-minded he is, how intelligent he is - when in his heart there is not even the weight of a mustard-seed of faith.'" Ḥudhayfah said: "There was a time when I would not care with whom of you I entered into a transaction, for if he were a Muslim, his faith would compel him to fulfil his obligations towards me, and if he were a Christian or a Jew, the ruler would compel him to fulfil his obligations towards me. But today I would not enter into a transaction with any of you except So and so and So and so."[56]

What the Messenger (ﷺ) meant by saying that the *amaanah* is deep-rooted in the heart of man is that it is firmly entrenched in its depths, then the *amaanah* will be removed and all that will be left is the trace of it.

6 - The Slave Woman Will Give Birth to Her Mistress and the Barefoot, Naked Shepherds Will Compete in Building Lofty Structures

Muslim narrated from 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭaab (ﷺ) that Jibreel (ﷺ) came to the Messenger (ﷺ) in the form of a man wearing bright white clothes, whose hair was exceedingly black. He asked the Messenger (ﷺ) about Islam, *eemaan* and *iḥsaan*, and the Messenger (ﷺ) answered his questions. Then he asked him about the Hour, and the Messenger (ﷺ) said, "The one who is being asked about it does not know more than the one who is asking." He said, "Tell me about its signs." He said, "When the slave woman gives birth to her mistress, and you see the barefoot, naked shepherds competing in building lofty structures."[57]

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[56] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Eemaan, Baab Raf' al-Amaanah*, 1/126, no. 143

[57] Muslim. See *Jaami' al-'Uloom wal-Ḥikam*, p. 21

Ibn 'Abbaas narrated the response of the Messenger (ﷺ) to the question as follows: "When you see the slave woman giving birth to her mistress or her master, and you see the keepers of sheep competing in building lofty structures, and you see the barefoot, hungry and dependent becoming the leaders of people, these are among the signs and portents of the Hour."

He said, "O' Messenger of Allah, who are the keepers of sheep and the barefoot, hungry and dependent?" He said, "The Arabs."[58]

Ibn Rajab said in his commentary on this hadith: "What is implied by the signs of the Hour mentioned in this hadith is that control of affairs will be given to those who are not qualified for that, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said to the one who asked him about the Hour: 'When control of affairs is entrusted to those who are not qualified for that, then look for the Hour.' When the barefoot, naked shepherds, who are ignorant and rough people, become the leaders of people and so wealthy that they compete with one another in building lofty structures, this leads to corruption in both religious and worldly systems..."[59]

The phrase, "When the slave woman gives birth to her mistres" refers to the one who is in control of her and owns her. The scholars said that this was a reference to the increase in concubines and their children, because the child of a concubine born to her master has the same status as her master, because a man's property will eventually end up with his son, which he will deal with as if he possesses it, whether his father gives him express permission or because he knows that by circumstance, custom or usage. It is said that the meaning is that they (concubines) would give birth to kings, and the slave woman would

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[58] Imaam Aḥmad, 1/318-319. Shaykh Naaṣir said, after mentioning its isnad: there is nothing wrong with this isnad. *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaheeḥah*, 3/332, hadith no. 1345

[59] *Jaami' al-'Uloom wal-Ḥikam*, by Ibn Rajab, p. 39

be one of his subjects and he would be her master and the master of others among his people. All of that did indeed happen; free men took a lot of concubine. It is known from shari'ah that the children born to concubines are free, hence the slave woman gives birth to her master. And some of them did indeed become kings or rulers.

7 - The Nations Will Call One Another to Attack the Muslim Ummah

Among the signs of the Hour will be the savage attack of the *kaafir* nations against this ummah. According to the hadith narrated from Thawbaan, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "Soon the nations will call one another to attack you, as diners call one another to the platter."

Someone asked the Prophet, "Will that be because we will be few in number those days?" He replied, "No, those days you will be many, but you will be foam, like the foam of the sea. Allah will remove fear and respect from the hearts of your enemies, and He will fill your hearts with *wahn* (weakness)." Someone inquired, "O' Messenger of Allah, what is that *wahn* (weakness)?" He said, "Love of this world and hatred of death."[60]

This happened more than once in the history, when the crusader nations called one another to attack this ummah, and again when the Tartars conquered the Islamic world. But this prophecy has been fulfilled in the last century in a clearer way, when the crusaders, Jews and atheists agreed to destroy the Islamic *khilaafah* (caliphate), then they carved up the Muslim lands which had been ruled by the

[60] The hadith is *ṣaḥeeḥ* when all its isnads are taken into account, as Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani said. He attributed it to Abu Dawood, Ar-Rooyaani, Ibn 'Asaakir, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, Abu Na'eem in his *Ḥilyah* and others. *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*. 2/684, hadith no. 958

khaleefah and shared them out among themselves, giving control of Palestine to the Jews. The Muslims became more lost than orphans at the feast of mean people. Up until the present day, the forces of evil are co-operating with one another to destroy this ummah, taking its resources and stealing its wealth and humiliating its men. The Muslim ummah is humbled and made submissive, and its large numbers are of no help to it. They are foam like the foam of the sea, and the reason, as the Messenger (ﷺ) said, is the *wahn* - love of this world and hatred of death.

The reason for this co-operation (among the *kuffaar*)

The adherence of this ummah to its religion and unity is a barrier which prevents its enemies from achieving their aims. No matter what the plots and strength of the enemy, they can never prevail over this ummah if it is united. According to the hadith narrated by Thawbaan, the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

> "I asked my Lord not to let overwhelming famine destroy the entire ummah, and not to allow any enemy from outside to wipe it out. My Lord said, 'O' Muhammad, if I have decreed something, it can never be changed. But I have granted you that overwhelming famine should never destroy your entire ummah, and that they should never be wiped out by an enemy from outside. Even if all the surrounding nations were to come together to destroy them, they will not be able to do so. But some of this ummah will destroy one another and take one another prisoner."[61]

[61] Muslim, *Baab Halaak hadhihil-ummah ba'duhum bi ba'd*, 2/2215, hadith no. 2289. "Overwhelming famine" - no famine will destroy the entire ummah, but if there is famine in one part of the ummah it will only affect a small portion of the ummah in comparison to the whole.

It is clear from this hadith that the unity of the ummah is a protection against its enemies, but when the strength of the ummah is turned against itself and divisions and disputes arise, Allah sends its enemies against it. This is an inevitable result, because in that situation the strength of the ummah is not focused against its enemies, rather it is directed against itself, so it destroys itself and allows its enemies to achieve what they want.

8 - Landslides, Stones from Heaven and Transformation into Animals, by Means of Which Allah Punishes Some People Among this Ummah

Various kinds of calamities, landslides, stones from heaven and transformation into animals happen to this ummah because they commit sins and do so openly, such as drinking wine, men wearing silk, committing *zinaa*, consuming *ribaa* and other kinds of corruption which reach the degree of permitting that which is forbidden.

In *Mu'jam aṭ-Ṭabaraani al-Kabeer* it is narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from Sahl ibn Sa'd that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "At the end of time there will be landslides, stones from heaven and transformation into animals, when musical instruments and female singers become widespread, and alcohol is permitted."[62]

It is narrated by Ibn Maajah from 'Abdullah with the wording, "Just before the Hour there will be transformation into animals, landslides and stones from heaven." There are many corroborating reports which attest to the soundness of this report, such as the hadith of 'Aa'ishah narrated by Tirmidhi: "Among this ummah there will be

[62] Also narrated by Aṭ-Ṭabaraani in *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer* and *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ* from Abu Sa'eed. Tirmidhi narrated it from 'Imraan ibn Ḥuṣayn. See *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 3/316, hadith no. 3559

landslides, transformation into animals and stones from heaven." ('Aa'ishah) said: "I said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, will we be destroyed even though there are righteous men among us?" He said, "Yes, if evil is prevalent."

A similar hadith is narrated from 'Imraan, which is close to the hadith of 'Aa'ishah, except that he said: "A man among the Muslims said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, when will that be?' He said, 'When female singers and musical instruments become widespread, and much wine is drunk.'" This is narrated by Tirmidhi.

Abu Na'eem narrated in *Akhbaar Iṣbahaan*, with an isnad going back to Ibn 'Abbaas, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "People among this ummah will stay up at night, eating, drinking and entertaining themselves, and in the morning they will have turned into monkeys and pigs."[63]

Bukhari narrated in a *mu'allaq* report from Abu 'Aamir or Abu Maalik that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "There will be among my ummah people who will permit *zinaa*, silk, wine and musical instruments. Some people will camp beside a mountain, and their shepherd will come to them with their grazing sheep, and ask them for something. They will say, 'Come back to us in the morning.' Then overnight Allah will destroy them; He will cause the mountain to fall on some of them, and He will transform the rest of them into monkeys and pigs, and they will remain like that until the Day of Resurrection."

The hadith of Aṭ-Ṭabaraani, Al-Bayhaqi, Ibn 'Asaakir and others is *mawṣool* and its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*; Ibn Ḥazm was mistaken in

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[63] See the commentary on this hadith in *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 4/293, hadith no. 1787

describing this hadith as *ḍa'eef*.[64]

Among the major landslides which will occur soon before the Hour begins is a landslide which will swallow up an entire army at the end of time, as stated in the hadith narrated by Aḥmad and Al-Ḥumaydi from Buqayrah the wife of Al-Qa'qaa' ibn Abi Ḥadrad al-Aslami, who said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) on the *minbar*, saying,

> 'O' people, if you hear of an army being swallowed up by the earth nearby, then the Hour is at hand.'"[65]

Perhaps this army will be swallowed up near Madeenah, as is indicated by the word "nearby (*qareeban*)."

The Messenger (ﷺ) has told us of some of the places in which these landslides, stones from heaven and transformation into animals will occur. In *Sunan Abi Dawood* it is narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from Anas that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "O' Anas, the people will build cities and one of them will be called Al-Baṣrah. If you pass by it or enter it, then beware of its salt-marshes and its pasturage, its palm-trees, its markets and the doors of its rulers. You should keep to its outskirts, because therein there will be landslides (or the swallowing up of people by the earth), stones from heaven and earthquakes, and people who will be transformed into monkeys and pigs overnight."[66]

9 - Abundance of Wealth

One of the signs of the Hour will be the abundance of wealth, such that if a man is given a hundred *dinars* of gold he will think that it is little, and a wealthy man will look for a poor man to accept his charity

[64] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 4/135, hadith no. 1604

[65] *Ibid*, 3/340, hadith no. 1355

[66] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 3/19, hadith no. 5433

and he will not find one. The Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) said to 'Awf ibn Maalik (may Allah be pleased with him), during the campaign of Khaybar,

> "Count six things just before the Hour," and he listed them, one of which was, "wealth will be abundant, such that a man will be given a hundred *dinars* and will remain discontent."[67]

In Muslim it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not begin until wealth increases among you and becomes abundant, such that a wealthy man will be concerned about whether anyone will accept charity from him. A man will be invited to take this money, and he will say, 'I do not need it.'"[68]

The meaning of the phrase "a wealthy man will be concerned" is that he will be upset, because he will not find any needy person to whom he can give money. The phrase "I do not need it" means, I have no need of it.

Ḥaarithah ibn Wahb said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

> 'Give in charity, for soon a man will walk about with his charity, and the one to whom he gives it will say, if you had come to us yesterday I would have accepted it, but now I have no need of it,' and he will not find anyone to accept it."[69]

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[67] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Jihaad, Baab ma yuhdhar min al-ghadr*. See *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/412

[68] Muslim, *Kitaab az-Zakaah, Baab at-Targheeb fis-Sadaqah qabl an la yoojad man yaqbaluhaa*, hadith no. 1012, 2/701

[69] Opt. cit, hadith no. 1011, 2/700. Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan*, *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 11/81. This version is narrated by Muslim.

It seems that this has happened more than once. It happened at the time of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azeez (ﷺ). Ya'qoob ibn Sufyaan reported in his Taareekh that 'Umar ibn Usayd ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmaan ibn Zayd ibn al-Khaṭṭaab said: "No, by Allah, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azeez did not die before a man would come to us with a great deal of money and say, 'Give this to the poor as you see fit,' but he would soon go back with his money, trying to find out where he could give it, but he could not find anyone so he would have to take it back. 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azeez made the people free of need."[70] When we discuss the Mahdi we shall quote the *aḥaadeeth* which state that there will be a *khaleefah* (caliph/ruler) who will scoop up handfuls of wealth, and when we discuss 'Eesa (Jesus) we will mention the *aḥaadeeth* which state that there will be an abundance of wealth in his time, and no one will accept charity.

10 - Exclusive Greetings, Widespread Trade and Severance of Family Ties

Aḥmad narrated in his *Musnad* with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood that he said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Just before the Hour there will be exclusive greetings and widespread trade, such that a woman will help her husband in his business, severance of family ties, false testimony, concealment of truthful testimony, and the emergence of the pen.'"[71]

What is meant by "exclusive greetings" is that a Muslim will only give *salaams* to those whom he knows. According to another hadith narrated by Aḥmad in his *Musnad* also from 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Among the signs of the Hour will be that a

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[70] *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/83

[71] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 2/250, hadith no. 647

man will give greetings only to those whom he knows." What the Messenger (ﷺ) told us about here has happened before, and is very widespread in our own times and is ever increasing. And Allah is the One Whose help we seek.

11 - The Standards by Which People are Measured Will Become Distorted

The Messenger (ﷺ) has told us that the standards by which people are measured will be distorted before the Hour comes. The word of a liar will be accepted and believed, whilst the word of an honest man will be rejected. Wealth and honour will be entrusted to the treacherous, whilst the honest and trustworthy will be accused of betrayal. Insignificant men will speak on matters which concern all people, but they will not offer anything but foolish opinions, and they will only guide people in the most twisted manner. Imam Aḥmad, Ibn Maajah and Al-Ḥaakim narrated that Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: 'There will come to the people years of treachery, in which the liar will be believed, the honest will be disbelieved, traitors will be entrusted with things and trustworthy people will be regarded as traitors, and the *ruwaybiḍah* will speak. It was asked, 'What is the *ruwaybiḍah*?' He said, 'The insignificant man, who will speak about matters of general interest.'"[72] Whoever thinks about the state of the world today will see that we are living in the time the Messenger (ﷺ) spoke of and about. For the liars among the *kuffaar* and *mushrikeen*, who control the media and those who follow them are believed, whilst those who are honest and just are not believed. The Muslim ummah is putting its wealth into the hands of the treacherous *kuffaar* and entrusting it to them, whilst the Muslims are described as betrayers and nothing is entrusted to them.

[72] Opt. cit. 4/508, hadith no. 1887

Insignificant men speak about world affairs and lead the world in the most foolish manner which has almost led to the destruction of humanity as a whole.

12 - The Police Will Whip the People

Oppression and injustice will increase at the end of time. Men appointed to maintain security and deter wrongdoing will themselves be spreading corruption. They themselves will become oppressors, whipping the backs of the people. This is very common in the Muslim world today.

It is narrated by Aḥmad, Al-Ḥaakim, and Aṭ-Ṭabaraani (in *Al-Kabeer*), with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from Abu Umaamah that, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'At the end of time there will be men with whips like the tails of cattle. They will go out in the morning subject to the wrath of Allah, and they will come back in the evening subject to His wrath.'"[73]

These people and their fate are also mentioned in Muslim, where it is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'There are two types of the people of Hell whom I have not seen: people with whips like the tails of cattle with which they strike the people, and women who are clothed yet naked, walking with an enticing gait, with their heads looking like the heads of camels. They will not enter Paradise nor even smell its fragrance, although its fragrance may be detected from such and such a distance.'"[74]

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[73] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 4/517, hadith no. 1893

[74] Muslim, 4/1680, hadith no. 2128

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SIGNS WHICH HAVE NOT YET HAPPENED

1 - The Arabian Peninsula Will Become Gardens and Rivers Once More

It is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) stated: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'The Hour will not come until wealth increases and becomes abundant, and until a man offers the *zakaah* of his wealth but will not be able to find anyone to accept it, and until the land of the Arabs becomes gardens and rivers once more.'" This has been narrated by Muslim.[1]

It will become gardens and rivers once again either because its people will dig wells and cultivate the land, etc., as is happening in our own times, or because of a change in the climate which will change its hot climate into a more temperate one, and its Creator will cause rivers and springs to flow thereby, which will turn our arid land into fertile land filled with fragrant, green vegetation. This is the more obvious meaning, as it describes a situation in which the Peninsula will be restored to its former state.

2 - The New Moon Will Increase in Size

Another of the signs indicating that the Hour is at hand will be that the moon, when it is new, will look bigger, so that it will be said,

[1] *Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh*, 3/21, hadith no. 5440

when it appears, that it is two or three nights old. It is narrated that Ibn Mas'ood (ﷺ) reported: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'Among the signs that the Hour is nigh will be that the new moon will appear bigger.'"[2]

It is narrated that Anas (ﷺ) related, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Among the signs that the Hour is nigh will be that the new moon will appear larger and it will be said that it is two nights old; people will take the mosques as thoroughfares; and there will be sudden death.'"[3]

3 - Animals and Inanimate Objects Will Speak to Men

Imam Aḥmad narrated in his *Musnad* that Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri said: "A wolf attacked a sheep and took it away. The shepherd went after the wolf to take the sheep back, and the wolf sat on its tail. The wolf said, 'Do you not fear Allah? Why do you seek to take away the provision that Allah has given to me?' The shepherd said, 'How amazing! A wolf sitting on its tail is speaking to me in human words!' The wolf said, 'Shall I not tell you something more amazing than that? Muhammad (ﷺ) in Yathrib, tells the people stories of the people of the past.' The shepherd left, driving his sheep, until he came to Madeenah. He penned the sheep in one of the corners of the city, then went to the Messenger (ﷺ) and told him what had happened. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) ordered that the people should be called to gather, then he

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[2] This is narrated by Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 5/213, hadith no. 5774. He said its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. He attributed it to Aṭ-Ṭabaraani in *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer*. It has been narrated also by others in the books of Sunnah from Abu Hurayrah.

[3] Attributed in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'* (5/214, hadith no. 5775) to Aṭ-Ṭabaraani in *Al-Awsaṭ*. He said, its isnad is *ḥasan*.

went out and said to the shepherd, 'Tell them what happened,' so he told them. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'He is speaking the truth. By the One in Whose hand is my soul, the Hour will not come until wild animals speak to people, and the end of a man's whip speaks to him, and his shoelace, and a man's thigh tells him of what his family did after he left.'"[4]

What the Messenger (ﷺ) described here may be something that is out of the ordinary, similar to a person's limbs bearing witness against him on the Day of Resurrection:

> ﴿الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾﴾
>
> ﴾This Day, We shall seal up their mouths, and their hands will speak to Us, and their legs will bear witness to what they used to earn.﴿ *(Qur'an 36: 65)*
>
> ﴿وَقَالُوا لِجُلُودِهِمْ لِمَ شَهِدتُّمْ عَلَيْنَا ۖ قَالُوا أَنطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ... ﴿٢١﴾﴾
>
> ﴾And they will say to their skins, 'Why do you testify against us?' They will say: 'Allah has caused us to speak.' He causes all things to speak...﴿ *(Qur'an 41: 21)*

Or he may have been describing the extent to which human science and inventions would develop, so that they would be able to understand the language of animals and make inanimate objects

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[4] Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. Narrated by Ibn Hibbaan and Al-Ḥaakim. Al-Ḥaakim said: it is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of Muslim, and Adh-Dhahabi agreed with him. Tirmidhi narrated the phrase, "by the One in Whose hand is my soul..." and said that it is a *ḥasan* hadith. See *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah* by Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani, hadith no. 122

speak, as is the case with modern inventions such as radios and televisions.

4 - The Euphrates Will Uncover a Mountain of Gold

Bukhari and Muslim narrated in their hadith compilations - *ṣaheeḥ* - that Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) stated: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Soon the Euphrates will uncover a treasure of gold. Whoever is present (at that time), let him not take anything from it.'" According to another report, "It will uncover a mountain of gold."

According to a report narrated by Muslim: "The Hour will not come until the Euphrates uncovers a mountain of gold over which the people will fight, and ninety-nine out of every hundred will be killed. Each man among them will say, perhaps I will be the one who will survive."[5]

Muslim narrated it from Ubayy ibn Ka'b with the wording, "Soon the Euphrates will uncover a mountain of gold. When the people hear of that, they will go to it, and the people who will be there will say, 'If we let the people take from it, they will take all of it.' So they will fight over it, and ninety-nine out of every hundred will be killed."[6]

The river will uncover this gold because its waters will dry up, as an-Nawawi says.[7] Or that may happen as a result of the river changing its course. This treasure or this mountain is buried beneath the soil, and is not known, but when the river changes its course for whatever

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[5] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Khurooj an-Naar, Fath al-Baari*, 13/78. Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab la taqoom as-Saa'ah hatta yaḥsur al-Furaat 'an jabal min dhahab*, 4/2219, hadith no. 2894

[6] Muslim, 4/2220, hadith no. 2295

[7] *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/9

reason, and flows near that mountain, it will uncover it. And Allah knows best.

The reason why the Messenger (ﷺ) forbade those who witness that to take anything from it is because taking it will provoke tribulation, killing and bloodshed.

5 - The Earth Will Bring Forth its Hidden Treasure

Muslim narrated in his *Saheeh* that Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'The earth will spew forth its hidden treasure like columns of gold and silver. The killer will come and say, 'For this I killed!' The breaker of family ties will come and say, 'For this I broke my ties of kinship!' The thief will come and say, 'For this my hand was cut off!' Then they will leave and will take nothing from it.'"[8]

This will be one of the signs of Allah, when He will command the earth to bring forth the treasures that are hidden in its depths. The Messenger (ﷺ) called those treasures *aflaadh al-kabid*; the root meaning of *faladh* (pl. *aflaadh*) is a piece of camel's liver, or a piece of meat. The meaning of the hadith is an analogy, i.e., it will bring forth from its depths the pieces that are buried in it. "Columns" (*usutwaan*, sing. *ustuwaanah*) means poles or pillars. They are described as columns because of their large size and great number.[9]

When the people will see the large amount of gold and silver, they will no longer be interested in it, and they will be grieved because they committed sins to achieve such an insignificant thing.

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[8] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Zakaah, Baab al-Targheeb fiṣ-Ṣadaqah qabla an laa yoojad man yaqbaluhaa*, hadith no. 1013, 2/701

[9] *Sharh an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/98

6 - The Muslims Will be Besieged in Madeenah

Among the signs of the Hour is that the Muslims will be defeated and will retreat. Their enemies will surround them and besiege them in Madeenah.

It is narrated that Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) reported: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Soon the Muslims will be besieged in Madeenah so that their most distant frontier outpost will be *Salaḥ*.'"[10]

7 - Jahjaah Will Seize Power

Jahjaah will be a man from Qaḥṭaan. He will become the king - the ruler, and seize power. He will be very strong and tyrannical. Muslim narrated from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not come until there emerges a man from Qaḥṭaan who will rule the people with a rod of iron."

According to a report by Muslim: "Day and night will not cease until power is seized by a man called Jahjaah."[11]

It may be that the person mentioned in the second report is someone other than the one mentioned in the first report. It is narrated in a *ṣaḥeeḥ* report from Abu Hurayrah in *Sunan at-Tirmidhi* that this Jahjaah will be one of the freed slaves. In *Sunan at-Tirmidhi* it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> "Night and day will not cease until power is seized by a man from among the freed slaves named Jahjaah."[12]

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[10] A *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith narrated by Abu Dawood and Al-Ḥaakim. *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'*, 6/363, hadith no. 8033

[11] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab taghayyur az-zamaan, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/76

[12] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/230, hadith no. 7561

What is meant by his ruling the people with an iron rod is that he will overpower the people, and they will follow him and obey him. Describing him as ruling with an iron rod (lit. driving the people with a stick) is a reference to his harshness. The name Jahjaah means one who shouts, and it is a befitting name for one who rules with a rod of iron as Ibn Ḥajar says.[13] Will this man lead the people to good or to evil? We have no clear indication on that from the Messenger (ﷺ).

8 - The Tribulation of the Saddle-Cloth and the Little Black Tribulation

It is narrated that 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar said: "We were with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and we started to talk about tribulations. We spoke of that a great deal, until the tribulation of the saddle-cloths was mentioned. Someone said, 'What is the tribulation of the saddle-cloths?' He said, 'It is the tribulation of fleeing and plunder, then the tribulation of ease, which will be started by a man from among my household, who will claim to belong to me but he will not belong to me, for my friends are the pious. Then the people will unite under a man who will be like a hip-bone on a rib (i.e., unstable). Then there will come the little black tribulation, which will not leave anyone among this ummah untouched. When it will be said that it has stopped, it will continue. At that time a man will be a believer in the morning but a *kaafir* by evening, until the people form two camps, the camp of faith in which there will be no hypocrisy, and the camp of hypocrisy in which there will be no faith. When that happens, then look for the *Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ) on that day or the next.'"[14]

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[13] *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/78

[14] A *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith, narrated by Abu Dawood, Al-Ḥaakim and Aḥmad. Classed as *ṣaḥeeḥ* by Al-Ḥaakim and Adh-Dhahabi agreed with him. See *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah* by Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani, 2/702, hadith no. 974

"Saddle cloth" refers to the blanket which is placed on the camel's back beneath the saddle. It is used as a metaphor for this *fitnah* (tribulation) because it will adhere to the people when it befalls them, as the saddle-cloth adheres to the back of the camel. Al-Khaṭṭaabi said: "It may be that this tribulation is likened to the saddle-cloth because it is black and dark. Plunder means the loss of wealth and family; it is said (in Arabic) *hariba ar-rajul* (the man is plundered) if his wealth and family are taken away.

The tribulation of ease refers to the things that people enjoy such as having plenty of money and easy life. *Fitnah* is mentioned in conjunction with it because ease is the cause of *fitnah* in the sense that a man may commit sin because of the good things that he has.

"Like a hip-bone on a rib" is a metaphor for something that is not stable, because the hip-bone does not fit with the rib...

The "little black tribulation" refers to a disaster that comes upon the people suddenly without prior warning.

9 - The Appearance of the Mahdi

(1) Texts which describe the Mahdi

It is narrated in the *ṣaḥeeḥ aḥaadeeth* that at the end of time, Allah will send a *khaleefah* who will be wise and just, and will control the affairs of the ummah. He will be one of the family of the Messenger (ﷺ), descending from Faaṭimah. His name will be the same as the Messenger (ﷺ), and his father's name will be the same as the name of the father of the Messenger (ﷺ). The *aḥaadeeth* describe him as having a wide forehead and a hooked nose. He will fill the earth with justice after it has been filled with injustice and oppression. Among the *aḥaadeeth* that have been narrated concerning that are the following:
(i) It is narrated that 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood reported: "The Messenger

of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'This world will not pass away until the Arabs are ruled by a man from among my family, whose name will be the same as mine." (Tirmidhi and Abu Dawood)

According to a report narrated by Abu Dawood, he said, "Even if there were only one day left for this world, Allah would extend that day last, until Allah sent a man from me - or from among my family - whose name will be like my name and whose father's name will be like my father's name. He will fill the earth with justice just as it had been filled with injustice and oppression.'"[15]

(ii) It is narrated that Umm Salamah (ﷺ) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'The Mahdi will be of my family, from among the descendants of Faaṭimah.'" (Abu Dawood, Ibn Maajah and Al-Ḥaakim).[16]

(iii) It is narrated that 'Ali (ﷺ) related: "The Messenger (ﷺ) said:

> 'The Mahdi is one of us, from the *ahl al-bayt* (members of the Prophet's lineage). Allah will prepare him in one night.'" (Aḥmad and Ibn Maajah).[17]

(iv) Imam Aḥmad and Abu Dawood further narrated from 'Ali: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'If even there were only one day left of time, Allah would send a man from among my family, to fill it with justice as it had been filled with injustice.'"[18]

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[15] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 3/24. The editor of *Al-Mishkaat* said: its isnad is *ḥasan* and the report of Abu Dawood is described as *ṣaḥeeḥ* in *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/70, hadith no. 5180

[16] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ Ṣagheer*, 6/22. Shaykh Naaṣir said: it is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

[17] *Ibid*, 6/22. Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani said, it is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

[18] This is a *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith. See *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 5/71, hadith no. 5181

(v) Abu Dawood narrated from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (ﷺ): "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'The Mahdi is from me. He will have a wide forehead and a hooked nose. He will fill the earth with fairness and justice, as it had been filled with injustice and oppression., and he will rule for seven years.'[19]

(vi) It is narrated that Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'The earth will be filled with injustice and oppression, when it is filled with injustice and oppression, Allah will send a man from me, whose name will be the same as mine, and he will fill it with justice and fairness, as it had been filled with injustice and oppression.'"

This is narrated by Al-Bazzaar and Ibn 'Adiyy in *Al-Kaamil*, by Abu Na'eem in *Akhbaar Isbahaan*, and by Al-Ḥaakim. It is also narrated by Imam Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbaan and Al-Ḥaakim, and by Abu Na'eem in *Al-Ḥilyah*, from Abu Sa'eed who attributed it to the Prophet (ﷺ), with the wording,

> "The Hour will not come until the earth is filled with injustice and oppression and aggression, then there will emerge a man from my descendants, or from the members of my family, who will fill it with justice and fairness, as it was filled with injustice and oppression."

Al-Ḥaakim said concerning the isnad of this report, "It is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of the two Shaykhs (Bukhari and Muslim)," and Ad-Dhahabi agreed with him. Abu Na'eem also

[19] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 3/24, hadith no. 5454. Its isnad is *ḥasan* as stated by the editor of *Al-Mishkaat*.

indicated that it is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

This hadith is also narrated by Al-Ḥaakim from Abu Sa'eed who attributed it to the Prophet (ﷺ) with the wording,

> "The Mahdi will emerge among my ummah, and Allah will grant him rain which will cause the earth to produce vegetation. He will be given wealth in abundance, livestock will increase and the ummah will become great. He will live for seven or eight - i.e., years." This is classed as *ṣaḥeeḥ* by Al-Ḥaakim, Ad-Dhahabi and Ibn Khaldoon.

It is also narrated by the compilers of *Sunan*, and by Aṭ-Ṭabaraani in *Al-Awṣaṭ al-Kabeer*. It is classed as *ṣaḥeeḥ* by Tirmidhi, Al-Ḥaakim and Ibn Ḥibbaan. The version narrated by Abu Dawood says: "If there was only one day left of this world, Allah would extend that day, until He sent a man from me or from the members of my family, whose name will be the same as mine and whose father's name will be the same as my father's name. He will fill the world with justice..."[20]

(2) The degree of soundness of the *aḥaadeeth* which speak of the Mahdi

Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The matter of the Mahdi is well known, and the *aḥaadeeth* which speak of him are plentiful; indeed they are *mutawaatir* and support one another. More than one scholars have stated that they are *mutawaatir*. They are *mutawaatir* with regard to the meaning,

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[20] I have summarized the valuable comments made by Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani (may Allah have mercy on him). For his full comments, see *Silsilat al Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 4/38, hadith no. 1529. See also *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 2/336, hadith no. 711

because they have so many isnads, although the narrators and *Ṣaḥaabah* differed as to the exact wording. But they indicate that this person is real and that he will surely appear. He is Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah al-'Alawi al-Ḥasani, from among the descendants of Al-Ḥasan ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭaalib (may Allah be pleased with them). This Imam will be a mercy from Allah towards the ummah at the end of time. He will emerge and will establish justice and fairness, and do away with oppression and injustice. By means of him, Allah will spread the banner of goodness, justice and guidance among the ummah and will guide the people aright.

I have examined many of the *aḥaadeeth* about the Mahdi, and I saw, as did Al-Shawkaani and others, and as Ibn al-Qayyim and others said, that some of them are *ṣaḥeeḥ*, some are *ḥasan*, some are *ḍa'eef* (weak) but may be strengthened by other reports, and some are fabricated. It is sufficient for us to look only at those whose isnads are sound, whether they are *ṣaḥeeḥ li dhaatihi* or *li ghayrihi* - *ṣaḥeeḥ* in themselves or *ṣaḥeeḥ* when corroborating reports are taken into account, whether they are *ḥasan* in and of themselves or *ḥasan* when corroborating reports are taken into account. By the same token, *ḍa'eef* reports - if they strengthen one another - may also be regarded as evidence by the scholars... The truth is that the majority of scholars - in fact, it is like consensus - affirm that the Mahdi will come, and that he is real, and will emerge at the end of time. As far as this matter is concerned, no attention need be paid to the views of those scholars who hold different opinions."[21]

Shaykh 'Abd al-Muḥsin ibn Ḥamad al-'Abbaad listed the *Ṣaḥaabah* who narrated the *aḥaadeeth* about the Mahdi; their number reached

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[21] These are the words of Shaykh Muthbit in his book *Ar-Radd 'ala man kadhdhaba bil-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah al-Waaridah fil-Mahdi li 'Abd al-Muḥsin ibn Ḥamad al-'Abbaad*, p. 157

twenty-six. He also listed the books of Sunnah in which these *aḥaadeeth* were narrated; they numbered thirty-six. It is narrated by the compilers of the four *Sunans*, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, Ibn Ḥibbaan in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*, Al-Ḥaakim in his *Mustadrak*, and others.[22]

Many scholars compiled these *aḥaadeeth* in books devoted to this topic, discussing their isnads. They include Abu Bakr ibn Abi Khaytham Zuhayr ibn Ḥarb, according to what is mentioned by Ibn Khaldoon. They also include Al-Ḥaafiẓ Abu Na'eem. Al-Ḥaafiẓ as-Suyooṭi summarized what has been narrated by Abu Na'eem in his book *Al-'Urf al-Wardi fi Akhbaar al-Mahdi*, and added to it. This book is published along with his book *Al-Ḥaawi lil-Fataawi*. They also include Al-Ḥaafiẓ ibn Katheer, who devoted a section to the topic of the Mahdi, as he stated in his book *Al-Fitan wal-Malaaḥim*. They also include Ibn Ḥajar al-Makki, who wrote a book called *Al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar fi 'Alaamaat al-Mahdi al-Muntaẓar.*" They also include Al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, the author of *Kanz al-Ummaal*, and Mullah 'Ali Qaari, who called his book *Al-Mashrab al-Wardi fi Madhhab al-Mahdi*. They also include Mar'i ibn Yoosuf al-Ḥanbali, Aṣ-Ṣan'aani and others.[23]

A large group of critics of hadith and their *aaimmah* (Imaams) stated that the *aḥaadeeth* about the Mahdi are *ṣaḥeeḥ*, such as Al-Ḥaakim, Ad-Dhahabi, Abu Na'eem, Ibn al-'Arabi al-Maaliki, Al-Qurṭubi, Shaykh al-Islam ibn Taymiyah, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, Al-Ḥaafiẓ ibn Hajar al-'Asqalaani, Suyooṭi and others.[24] Hence no attention should be paid to those who regard these *aḥaadeeth* as *ḍa'eef* or false, who are not competent in this field of knowledge.

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[22] *'Aqeedah Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Athar fil-Mahdi al-Muntaẓar* by 'Abd al-Muḥsin ibn Ḥamad al-'Abbaad; it is published in the same volume as the book mentioned above, p. 166–168

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 168

[24] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 4/40-41

(3) The beliefs of the Muslim sects concerning Mahdi

1 - The belief of *Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* is in accordance with the *ṣaḥeeḥ aḥaadeeth* that we have quoted here, that the Mahdi will be a righteous and rightly-guided ruler whom Allah will send to renew and revive this religion, and Allah will make this religion supreme at his hands.

Ibn Khaldoon said: "Know that the prevalent view among all the people of Islam throughout the ages is that at the end of time there will inevitably appear a man from among the *Ahl al-Bayt* (the Prophet's lineage) who will support the religion (Islam) and cause justice to prevail; the Muslims will follow him and he will rule over the Muslim lands. He will be called Al-Mahdi. The emergence of the *Dajjaal* and subsequent signs of the Hour, proven in the *ṣaḥeeḥ* reports, will happen after he appears. 'Eesa (Jesus) will descend afterwards and will kill the *Dajjaal*, or he will descend at the same time and help him (the Mahdi) to kill him (the *Dajjaal*), and he will be led by the Mahdi in prayer."[25]

2 - The *Imami Shi'ah* - the twelvers - believe that the Mahdi is the last of their Imams, the twelfth Imam who is called Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-'Askari (Muhammad al-ghaa'ib - the invisible). According to them, he is descendent from Al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Ali, not from Al-Ḥasan. They believe that he entered the tunnel of Saamuraa' more than 1100 years ago, when he was five years old. They believe that he is

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[25] *Al-Muqaddimah* by Ibn Khaldoon, p. 555. It is important to note here that Ibn Khaldoon regarded many of the *aḥaadeeth* about the Mahdi as *ḍa'eef* (weak), and he was not right in doing so. But we cannot say that Ibn Khaldoon did not believe in the Mahdi. He classed some of these *aḥaadeeth* as *ṣaḥeeḥ*. After quoting and commenting on the *aḥaadeeth* he says (p. 574), "As you see, they are not free from weakness apart from a few of them." But these few are sufficient to establish belief in the Mahdi.

present but invisible. This is the Mahdi whose return they are awaiting. But there is no evidence or proof for their belief, whether from the narrated reports or in terms of common sense. It is contrary to the laws of Allah which govern human beings, and it is illogical. What is the point of being hidden or occulted if he is alive? On the contrary, he should emerge and enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil.

3 - Those who deny the existence of the Mahdi are individuals who claim to belong to *Ahl as-Sunnah*. But they do not have much experience in examining the texts and investigating isnads (chains of transmitter). Many scholars have refuted their specious arguments in books devoted to that purpose, the last of which that we have seen was written by Shaykh al-'Allaamah 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Abbaad, entitled *Ar-Radd 'ala man kadhdhaba bil-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah al-Waaridah fil-Mahdi.*[26] There is also a book by Shaykh Ḥamood ibn 'Abdullah ibn Ḥamad at-Tuwaijri, entitled *Al-Iḥtijaaj bil-Athr 'ala man ankara al-Mahdī al-Muntaẓar.*

4 - There have been rulers in the past who claimed to be the Mahdi, or whose people made this claim for them. Some of them were righteous men who were given the title of Mahdi as a nickname, with no intention of claiming that this was the Mahdi of whom the Messenger (ﷺ) spoke; the name was given in the hope that they would be among the rightly-guided leaders who would speak the truth and rule accordingly. Among these was the 'Abbaasi (Abassid) *khaleefah* al-Mahdi. Some of the rulers who claimed to be the Mahdi or whose people called them the Mahdi were evildoers, such as the heretic 'Ubaydullah ibn Maymoon al-Qaddaaḥ (259 - 322 AH). His grandfather was a Jew who claimed to belong to a Magian family, but he falsely claimed to belong to the family of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and claimed to be the Mahdi of whom the Prophet (ﷺ) had

[26] Published by Ar-Rasheed Press in Madeenah

spoken. He seized power and became strong, and his evil became widespread. His dynasty ruled over the *Maghreb* (North Africa), Egypt, the Ḥijaaz and Syria. True Islam became alienated and was sorely tested by them. They claimed to be divine, and that the *shari'ah* had both a hidden (*baaṭin*) an apparent (*ẓaahir*) aspect.

They were the *baaṭini* Qaraamiti *Raafiḍi* kings, the enemies of Islam, who claimed to be *Raafiḍis* (rejectionists: those who reject the right of the first three caliphs to the caliphate) and claimed to be descending from the Prophet's family, but they followed a heretic religion which they propagated. They prevailed until Allah rid the ummah of them by means of Ṣalaaḥ ad-Deen al-Ayyoobi, who destroyed them. Among them was the "Mahdi" who emerged in the *Maghreb* (North Africa), named Muhammad ibn Toomart (485 - 524 AH). He was a liar and an oppressor who took power by force. He claimed to be the promised Mahdi. He would put some of his followers inside graves and order them to tell the people that he was the Mahdi, then he would destroy the graves at night whilst they were still inside, burying them alive so that his secret would not be discovered.[27]

5 - There was also a Mahdi sect called Al-Keesaaniyyah. They claimed that the Mahdi was Muhammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah, and that he is alive, living in *Jabal Riḍwaa*. They say that he is between two lions who guard him, and that there are two springs there, flowing with water and honey. They claim that forty of his companions met him and are with him, and that no one has found any trace of them, but they are alive and have provision. They say that he will return after his occultation and that he will fill the earth with justice as it was filled with injustice. They say that he was punished with this imprisonment for going out to meet 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwaan, or it

[27] *Al-Manaar al-Muneef fiṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥ waḍ-Ḍa'eef* by Ibn al-Qayyim, p. 153

is said Yazeed ibn Mu'aawiyah. This belief is referred to by (the poet) Katheer 'Izzah when he said:

"A grandson who will never taste death until he leads the cavalry, carrying the banner.

He disappeared and no one saw him for a long time, in *Riḍwaa*, and he has honey and water."

As-Sayyid al-Ḥumayri also followed this belief. He said:

"But say to the Imam, 'May my soul be sacrificed for you. You have stayed in the mountain for too long.'"[28]

How foolish these people are, and how little they understand. They believe things for which there is no proof, whether from common sense or from the narrated reports.

(4) The time when he will emerge

Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "Ibn Katheer said in *al-Fitan wal-Malaaḥim*: I think that it will be at the time when the Messiah descends. The hadith narrated by Al-Ḥaarith ibn Abi Usaamah[29] indicates that, because it says that their leader will be the Mahdi. This indicates that he will be present when 'Eesa ibn Maryam descends, as is also indicated by some of the reports of Muslim and some other reports, but it is not clear. It is apparent and makes sense, but it is not definite.[30]

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[28] *Lawaami' al-Anwaar al-Bahiyyah* by As-Safaareeni, 2/85

[29] The hadith of Jaabir says, "Eesa ibn Maryam will descend, and their leader the Mahdi will say, 'Come and lead us in prayer.' He will say, 'No, your leader is from amongst you, as an honour from Allah to this ummah.'" Ibn al-Qayyim said, after narrating this in *Al-Manaar al-Muneef*, "This is a *jayyid* isnad."

[30] *Ar-Radd 'ala man kadhdhaba bil-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Saḥeeḥah al-Waaridah fil-Mahdi*, p. 160

Muslim narrated in his *Saheeh* from three of the Mothers of the Believers - Umm Salamah, Hafsah and 'Aa'ishah - that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) spoke of an army pursuing a fugitive who would seek refuge in the House (the Ka'bah), and Allah would cause that army to be swallowed up by the earth on a plain. According to one report, Umm Salamah said, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'A fugitive will seek security in the House, and an army will be sent after him. When they reach a field the earth will swallow them up.' I said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, what about one who was forced to join them?' He said, 'He will be swallowed up with them, but on the Day of Resurrection he will be raised according to his intention.'"[31]

According to another report, Hafsah (ﷺ) said: "I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say,

> 'They would seek protection in this House against the army heading to attack it. When the army will be on a plain ground, the earth will swallow up the middle of the army, and the first of them will call out to the last of them. There will be none left but those who were on the edges of this army, who will tell others what happened to them.'" According to another report, "Some people who have no one to protect them and who are few in number and have no weapons, will seek refuge in this House..."[32]

According to the report of 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ), the Prophet (ﷺ) was startled in his sleep. She reported: "We said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, you did something in your sleep that you have never done before.' He said, 'Strange it is that some people from my ummah will attack the House (with the intention of killing) a man from Quraysh who will

[31] Muslim, 4/2208, hadith no. 2882

[32] *Ibid*, 4/2209, hadith no. 2883

try to seek protection in the House. When they (the army) will be on a plain they will be swallowed up by the earth.' We said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, there may be people on the road.' He said, 'Yes, there may be those who are following the army because of certain intentions, and others who come under duress, and wayfarers. They will all be destroyed together, but they will be resurrected in different states.'"[33]

Is this man who will seek refuge in the House, whom Allah will support and help, and for whom Allah will destroy those who seek to harm him, will be the Mahdi who is mentioned in the *aḥaadeeth* quoted previously? We have no clear evidence to that effect, as far as we know. Allah knows best.

(5) Is the Mahdi the *khaleefah* who will scoop up handfuls of wealth?

The *aḥaadeeth* mention a *khaleefah* in whose time wealth will increase so much that he will scoop up handfuls of money, without counting it. Is this the Mahdi or someone else? Allah knows best.

Muslim narrated in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* that Jaabir ibn 'Abdullah said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'At the end of my ummah, there will be a *khaleefah* who will scoop up handfuls of wealth.'"[34]

And he also narrated that Abu Sa'eed said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'Among your *khulafa'* (rulers) will be one who will scoop up handfuls of wealth, and will not count it.'"[35]

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[33] Muslim, 4/2210, hadith no. 2884

[34] *Ibid*, 4/2234, hadith no. 2913

[35] Opt, cit, 2235, hadith no. 2914

CHAPTER FIVE
THE MAJOR SIGNS

Introduction: The Major Signs in Order of Occurrence

There are major signs which will indicate that the Hour is at hand. When they appear, the Hour will be close behind them. Muslim narrated on the authority of Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd al-Ghifaari: "The Prophet (ﷺ) looked at us whilst we were discussing something.[1] He said, 'What are you talking about?' They said, 'We are talking about the Hour.' He said, 'It will not come until you see ten signs ahead of it.'

He mentioned the smoke, the *Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ), the Beast, the rising of the sun from the west, the descent of 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam, Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj, and three landslides, one in the east, one in the west and one in the Arabian Peninsula, and the last sign is a fire which will emerge from Yemen and drive the people to their place of gathering."[2]

The major signs will come one after the other; hardly any time will elapse between one and the next. The way they will follow one after another will be like what happens when a necklace breaks and the beads fall one after another; the first bead falls and the others follow it straight away. Al-Ḥaakim narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad that Anas ibn Maalik (ﷺ) reported: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

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[1] He looked out over them because he was in a room above them. This is stated clearly in another report narrated in Muslim

[2] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan. Baab fi Aayaat allati takoon qabl as Saa'ah*, 4/2225, hadith no. 2901. In *Jaami' al-Uṣool* it is attributed to Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi as well.

> "The signs are like beads next to one another on a string. When the string breaks they follow one another."[3]

The Messenger (ﷺ) said that a great war will happen between the Muslims and the Romans, which he called *malḥamah* (a fierce battle). Then the Muslims will conquer Constantinople, then the *Dajjaal* will emerge. Mu'aadh ibn Jabal (ﷺ) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "When *Bayt al-Maqdis* (Jerusalem) will be flourishing, Yathrib will be in ruins. When Yathrib will be in ruins, the fierce battle will take place. When the fierce battle takes place, Constantinople will be conquered. When Constantinople is conquered, the *Dajjaal* will emerge." This is narrated by Abu Dawood.[4]

What the Messenger (ﷺ) meant was that these events would happen one after another. The reader will learn how the Muslims at that time will be in conflict with the Romans when they engage in a great battle, which the Messenger (ﷺ) called *malḥamah* (a fierce battle); after they defeat them they will conquer Constantinople, then the *Dajjaal* will emerge.

After the *Dajjaal* emerges, 'Eesa (Jesus) will descend and kill the *Dajjaal*, then Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog) will emerge during the time of 'Eesa, and Allah will destroy them during his time. The sequence of events up to this point is clear.

With regard to the remaining signs, the exact sequence is not quite clear. The sun will rise from the west, the Beast of the earth will emerge and the fire will emerge which will gather the people

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[3] Al-Ḥaakim said: (it is) *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of Muslim, and Adh-Dhahabi agreed with him. Al-Albaani said, it is as they said. *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 4/361, hadith no. 1762

[4] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 3/17, hadith no. 5425. Its isnad is *ḥasan* as stated by the editor of *Al-Mishkaat*.

together. These things will certainly happen after the emergence of the *Dajjaal*, the descent of 'Eesa (Jesus) and the emergence of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog), but which of them will precede the other? I mean the rising of the sun from the west, the emergence of the Beast and the fire gathering the people together.

The hadith narrated by Muslim from Ḥudhayfah clearly states that the fire from Yemen which will gather the people together will be the last of the signs. The Messenger (ﷺ) mentioned the ten major signs, and concerning the tenth sign, which is the fire, he said,

> "And the last of that will be a fire which emerges from Yemen and will drive the people to their place of gathering."[5]

So there remain six signs - the rising of the sun from the west, the emergence of the Beast, the smoke, and three landslides, one in the east, one in the west and the third in the Arabian Peninsula. The rising of the sun from the west and the emergence of the Beast will occur after 'Eesa (Jesus) descends and kills the *Dajjaal*. The destruction of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog) will take place during his time, after mankind will become corrupt and Islam wiped out, and before the emergence of the fire which will gather the people together. But which of them will come first, the rising of the sun from the west or the emergence of the Beast? This is what we cannot be certain about, because the Messenger (ﷺ) did not make any definite statement concerning that. According to the hadith of 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr (رضي الله عنه), he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

> "The first signs will be the rising of the sun from the west and the emergence of the Beast to the people in the morning. Whichever of them comes first, the other will immediately follow."[6]

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[5] Muslim, 4/2225, no. 2901

[6] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab fi Khurooj ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2260, hadith no. 2941

We cannot take this hadith to mean that the rising of the sun from the west will happen before the emergence of the *Dajjaal*, the descent of 'Eesa (Jesus son of Mary) and the emergence of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog), because the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The first signs will be the rising of the sun from the west... "What is most apparent from the reports is that the emergence of the *Dajjaal* will be the first of the major signs, which indicates that the regular state of affairs in most of the earth will be changed. That will end with the death of 'Eesa ibn Maryam. The rising of the sun from the west will be the first of the signs which indicate that the state of affairs in the heavens will be changed. That will end with the onset of the Hour. Perhaps the emergence of the Beast will occur on that day on which the sun rises from the west."[7]

"Al-Ḥaakim Abu 'Abdullah said: it seems that the rising of the sun from the west will happen before the emergence of the Beast, then the Beast will emerge on that day or soon afterwards."[8]

With regard to the rest of the signs, the three landslides and the smoke, we do not know their place in the sequence of the major signs. We have not seen anything in the *ṣaḥeeḥ* texts to describe that. Allah knows best.

1 - The Smoke

Among the major signs which will happen just before the Hour is the smoke. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَٱرْتَقِبْ يَوْمَ تَأْتِى ٱلسَّمَآءُ بِدُخَانٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝١٠ يَغْشَى ٱلنَّاسَ هَٰذَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝١١﴾

[7] *Fatḥ al Baari*, 11/353

[8] *Ibid*

> ﴿Then wait you for the Day when the sky will bring forth a visible smoke, Covering the people, this is a painful torment.﴾ *(Qur'an 44: 10-11)*

This clearly indicates that the smoke is one of the major signs in the hadith narrated by Muslim from Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd al-Ghifaari, who said: "The Prophet (ﷺ) looked at us whilst we were discussing something. He said, 'What are you talking about?' They said, 'We are talking about the Hour.' He said, 'It will not come until you see ten signs ahead of it.' He mentioned the smoke, the *Dajjaal*, the Beast, the rising of the sun from the west, the descent of 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam (Mary), Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog), and three landslides, one in the east, one in the west and one in the Arabian Peninsula, and the last sign is a fire which will emerge from Yemen and drive the people to their place of gathering."[9]

Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) thought that this sign had already come and gone. Muslim narrated in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* that Masrooq said: "We were sitting with 'Abdullah, and he was reclining between us. A man came to him and said, 'O' Abu 'Abd ar-Raḥmaan, there is a story teller at the gates of Kindah, and he is claiming that the sign of the smoke will come and will take the souls of the *kuffaar*, but it will only make the believers sneeze.' Abdullah sat up angrily and said, 'O' people, fear Allah! Whoever among you knows something, let him say what he knows, and whoever does not know, let him say, Allah knows best. It is a sign of knowledge for anyone of you to say, when he does not know, Allah knows best. For Allah said to His Prophet (ﷺ):

﴿قُلْ مَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُتَكَلِّفِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾﴾

> ﴿Say [O' Muhammad]: 'No wage do I ask of you for this [the Qur'an], nor am I one of the *Mutakallifoon* [those

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[9] Muslim, 4/2225, hadith no. 2901.

who pretend and fabricate things which do not exist]'"﴿

(Qur'an 38: 86)

When the Messenger of Allah saw the people ignoring him, he said, "O' Allah, seven years like the years of Yoosuf." So they were overtaken by a famine which destroyed everything, until they were forced to eat skins and dead animals because of their hunger. One of them would look to the sky and see something that looked like smoke. Abu Sufyaan came to him and said, "O' Muhammad, you have come enjoining obedience to Allah and upholding of the ties of kinship. Your people have been destroyed, so pray to Allah for them." Allah (ﷻ) said:

﴾فَارْتَقِبْ يَوْمَ تَأْتِي السَّمَاءُ بِدُخَانٍ مُّبِينٍ (١٠) يَغْشَى النَّاسَ هَٰذَا عَذَابٌ
أَلِيمٌ (١١) رَّبَّنَا اكْشِفْ عَنَّا الْعَذَابَ إِنَّا مُؤْمِنُونَ (١٢) أَنَّىٰ لَهُمُ الذِّكْرَىٰ وَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ
رَسُولٌ مُّبِينٌ (١٣) ثُمَّ تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا مُعَلَّمٌ مَّجْنُونٌ (١٤) إِنَّا كَاشِفُو الْعَذَابِ قَلِيلًا
إِنَّكُمْ عَائِدُونَ (١٥)﴿

﴾Then wait you for the Day when the sky will bring forth a visible smoke, Covering the people, this is a painful torment. [They will say]: 'Our Lord! Remove the torment from us, really we shall become believers!' How can there be for them an admonition [at the time when the torment has reached them], when a Messenger explaining things clearly has already come to them. Then they had turned away from him [Messenger Muhammad] and said: '[He is] one taught [by a human being], a madman!' Verily, We shall remove the torment for a while. Verily, you will revert [to disbelief].﴿

(Qur'an 44: 10-15)

He said,

﴿يَوْمَ نَبْطِشُ الْبَطْشَةَ الْكُبْرَىٰ إِنَّا مُنتَقِمُونَ ﴿١٦﴾﴾

﴾Will the torment of the Hereafter be lifted? 'On the Day when We shall seize you with the greatest seizure [punishment]. Verily, We will exact retribution'.﴿

(Qur'an 44: 16)

The "greatest seizure" was the day of Badr. So the smoke has come and gone, as have the seizure and the inevitable punishment and the verse of *Soorat ar-Room* has been fulfilled.[10]

Ibn Mas'ood thought that this sign had already appeared and gone, and he quoted as evidence for that the fact that the punishment which will befall the *kaafireen* (disbelievers) in the Hereafter will not be lifted from them, whereas the *aayah* states that Allah will lift the torment from them for a little while. A group of the *salaf* (pious predecessor) followed Ibn Mas'ood's opinion, such as Mujaahid, Abu 'Aaliyah, Ibraaheem an-Nakha'i, aḍ-Ḍaḥḥaak and 'Aṭiyah al-'Awfi; Ibn Jareer preferred this view.[11]

Ibn Katheer thought that it is more likely that the smoke did not appear yet. He narrated the hadith of Abu Maalik al-Ash'ari who

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[10] The "inevitable punishment" is referred to in the *aayah*, ﴾But you have indeed rejected [Him], and soon will come the inevitable [punishment]﴿ *(Qur'an 25: 77* - Yoosuf 'Ali's translation).

The verse of *Soorat ar-Rum* refers to the *aayaat:*

﴾*Alif-Laam-Meem.* [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'an, and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings]. The Romans have been defeated. In the nearest land [Syria, 'Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine], and they, after their defeat, will be victorious﴿ *(Qur'an 30: 1-3)*

This is narrated by Muslim, 4/2157, hadith no. 2798. Ibn Katheer said in his *Tafseer* (6/246): This hadith is narrated in *Aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥayn* (Bukhari and Muslim) and by Aḥmad. It is also mentioned by Tirmidhi and Nasaa'i in their *Tafseers.*

[11] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer,* 6/247

related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Your Lord warns you about three things: the smoke which will merely make the believer sneeze whilst it will cause the *kaafir* to swell up and it will come out from each ear. The second is the Beast, and the third is the *Dajjaal*.'"

This is narrated by Ibn Jareer. It is also narrated by Aṭ-Ṭabaraani and its isnad is *jayyid.* Ibn Katheer mentioned that the view that the smoke had not come yet was the view of 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭaalib, Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, Ibn 'Abbaas and Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri.[12] Ibn Katheer made the following points in support of his view:

1- The *ṣaḥeeḥ* and *ḥasan aḥaadeeth* narrated on this topic indicate that the sign has not yet come to pass.

2- The *aayah*,

﴿فَٱرْتَقِبْ يَوْمَ تَأْتِى ٱلسَّمَآءُ بِدُخَانٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٠﴾﴾

> ﴾Then wait you for the Day when the sky will bring forth a visible smoke.﴿ *(Qur'an 44: 10)*

means something which is obvious and which everyone will see. It is not something imagined, as suggested by Ibn Mas'ood.

3- The *aayah*,

﴿يَغْشَى ٱلنَّاسَ ... ﴿١١﴾﴾

﴾Covering the people...﴿ *(Qur'an 44: 11)*

If it was something imaginary, referring only to the *mushrik* inhabitants of Makkah, Allah would not have said, "Covering the people?"[13]

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[12] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 6/248

[13] *Ibid*, 6/247

An-Nawawi said in his commentary on Muslim, when discussing the hadith, "(The Hour) will not come until you see ten signs ahead of it,' and he mentioned the smoke...":

"The hadith confirms the view of those who say that the smoke will take the souls of the *kuffaar*, whilst it will merely make the believers sneeze, and that it has not happened yet; it will appear shortly before the Hour comes. We have mentioned previously, in *Kitaab Bad' al-Khalq* (The beginning of creation) those who stated that. We also mentioned that Ibn Mas'ood denied it and said that it was an expression referring to the famine suffered by Quraysh, when they saw something like smoke between them and the sky. A group (of scholars) agreed with Ibn Mas'ood. The other view was expressed by Ḥudhayfah, Ibn 'Umar and Al-Ḥasan. Ḥudhayfah narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that it (the smoke) would remain on the earth for forty days. It is possible that there are two smokes, in order to reconcile between these reports."[14]

2 - *Fitnat ad-Dajjaal* (the Tribulation of the *Dajjaal*)

(1) His tribulation will be the greatest in human history

The tribulation of the *Dajjaal* will happen at the end of time, and is one of the major signs of the Hour. His *fitnah* will be one of the greatest tribulations in human history. In Muslim it is narrated that Abu Dahmaa' and Abu Qataadah said: "We used to pass by Hishaam ibn 'Aamir on our way to 'Imraan ibn Ḥuṣayn. One day he said, 'You pass by me to go to other men, who did not spend more time with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) than I did, and who are not more knowledgeable about his hadith than I am. I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, 'Between the creation of Adam and the onset of the Hour there will not be any creation greater than the *Dajjaal*.'"

[14] *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/27

According to another report: "There will not be any matter more serious than the *Dajjaal*."[15] For this reason, all the Prophets warned their people about his tribulation, but our Messenger (ﷺ) was the one who warned his ummah the most about him.

In Bukhari it is narrated that 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stood up among the people and praised Allah as He deserves to be praised, then he mentioned the *Dajjaal* and said: 'I warn you about him. There is no Prophet who did not warn his people about him, but I will tell you something about him which no Prophet has ever told his people: he is one-eyed and Allah is not one-eyed."[16]

Both Bukhari and Muslim, narrated that Anas (ﷺ) related: "The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> 'No Prophet was ever sent but he warned his nation about the one-eyed liar; he is one-eyed but your Lord is not one-eyed, and between his eyes it is written '*kaafir*'."[17]

In *Sunan at-Tirmidhi* and *Sunan Abi Dawood* it is narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar that the Messenger (ﷺ) said concerning the *Dajjaal*, "I warn you about him, for there is no Prophet who did not warn his people about him. Nooḥ warned his people about him. But I will tell you something that no Prophet has ever told his people. You should know that he is one-eyed, but Allah is not one-eyed."[18]

In *Sunan ibn Maajah, Ṣaḥeeḥ ibn Khuzaymah* and *Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim*, it is narrated from Abu Umaamah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

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[15] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab fi Baqiyyat min aḥaadeeth ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2266, hadith no. 2946

[16] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/90

[17] *Ibid*, 91; Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal wa Ṣifat ma ma'ahu*, 4/2247, hadith no. 2933

[18] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/356, hadith no. 2848. This version is narrated by Tirmidhi.

"O' people, there has never been any tribulation on the face of the earth, since Allah created mankind, greater than the tribulation of the *Dajjaal*. Allah has never sent any Prophet, but he warned his nation about the *Dajjaal*. I am the last of the Prophets, and you are the last of the nations. He will undoubtedly emerge amongst you."[19]

(2) The reason why he is called *Al-Maseeḥ ad-Dajjaal*

Ibn al-Atheer said: "The *Dajjaal* is called *maseeḥ* because one of his eyes is braded (*mamsooḥ*). *Maseeḥ* means a person whose face is abraded (*mamsooḥ*) on one side, with no eye or eyebrow. This is in contrast to the Messiaḥ (*Maseeḥ*) 'Eesa ibn Maryam, who is so called because he used to wipe (*yamsah*) the sick and they would be healed by Allah's leave.[20] And the *Dajjaal* is the liar."[21]

He is called "*Dajjaal*" because - as Ibn Ḥajar said - because he covers the truth with falsehood. It is said (in Arabic) *dajala al-ba'eer bil-qiṭraan* (he covered the camel with pitch) when it is painted with pitch; or *dajala al-inaa' bidh-dhahab* (he covered the vessel with gold) when it is plated with gold. Ibn Durayd said: he is called *ad-Dajjaal* because he covers the truth with lies. It is also said that this is because he will travel to all the parts of the earth, or because he will cover the earth.[22]

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[19] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/273, no. 7752. Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

[20] Here the author is discussing the usage of the Arabic word *maseeḥ* which has different shades of meaning according to which it is being referred to. He is explaining why the same word is used for two disparate personages. [Translator]

[21] *Jaami' al-Uṣool* by Ibn al-Atheer, 4/204. See also *Lisaan al-'Arab*, under the heading *masaha*.

[22] *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 11/91

(3) The state of the Muslims at the time when the *Dajjaal* will emerge

Just before the *Dajjaal* emerges, the Muslims will have a high status and great power. It seems that his emergence will be for the purpose of putting an end to that power. At that time, there will be a peace treaty between the Muslims and the Romans; they will attack a common enemy and defeat them, then war will break out between the Muslims and the crusaders. In *Sunan Abi Dawood* it is narrated that Dhu Makhbar related: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

> 'You will make a peace treaty with the Romans, and you and they will attack a common enemy. You will be victorious and will take booty, then you will return safely, until you camp in Marj Dhi Talool. Then one of the Christians will raise the cross and say, 'The cross has attained victory.' One of the Muslims will become angry and will break it (the cross). At that point the Romans will break the treaty and start preparing for the great battle." Some added: "The Muslims will run for their weapons and they will fight, and Allah will honour that group with martyrdom."[23]

So you can see how powerful the Muslims will be at that time. They will fight, be victorious, collect booty and return safely. You can see how strong their adherence to their religion will be, for when that crusader raises the cross and claims that the victory which the Muslims helped to achieve was a victory for the cross, a Muslim will be moved by his protective jealousy towards his religion to get up and break the cross. The group of Muslims in that place will run for their weapons and will fight the Romans - despite the fact that they

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[23] *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 3/18, hadith no. 5428. The editor of *Al-Mishkaat*, Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani, said, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

will be few in number in that place. The Messenger (ﷺ) testified that they would be martyrs and that Allah would honour them with martyrdom. That betrayal of the Romans, and the subsequent events, will be the cause of that great battle.

The great battle and the conquest of Constantinople

A great battle will take place between the Muslims and the crusaders.[24] The cause of this battle will be the one referred to in the hadith quoted above. More than one hadith describes this battle and its horrors, how the Muslims will be patient during this battle, then they will achieve victory over their enemies. It should be noted that among the Muslim ranks will be large numbers of Christians who will embrace Islam and become good Muslims. In Muslim it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not come until the Romans camp in Al-A'amaaq or in Daabiq.[25] An army will come out from Madeenah to meet them, composed of the best people on earth at that time. When they face one another, the Romans will say, 'Do not stand between us and those whom you took prisoner (and converted to Islam); let us fight them.' The Muslims will say, 'No, by Allah, we will not stand aside and let you fight our brothers.' So they will fight. One-third will flee, and Allah will never accept their repentance; one-third will be killed, and they will be the best of martyrs in the sight of Allah; and one-third will attain victory and will never be influenced by *fitnah*. They

[24] The *aḥaadeeth* indicate that the Romans will be the greatest in number at the end of time. In *Musnad Aḥmad* and Muslim it is narrated from *Al-Mustawrid* that the Messenger said: "The Hour will come when the Romans are greatest in number." *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 3/51

[25] Two places in Syria near Aleppo

will conquer Constantinople,[26] when they - the Muslims - will be sharing out the booty, their swords hung up on the olive-trees, the *Shayṭaan* will shout, 'The *Dajjaal* has taken your place amongst your families!' So they will rush and find that this was not true. When they will reach Syria he (the *Dajjaal*) will emerge. And when they will be preparing to fight, or will be forming rows, then the time for prayer will come. 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam will descend He will lead them against the *Dajjaal*. When the enemy of Allah sees him, he will melt like salt in water. If 'Eesa were to leave him alone he would melt away and died, but Allah will kill him at his ('Eesa's) hands, and he will show them his (*Dajjaal's*) blood on his spear."[27]

The Messenger (ﷺ) described the horrors of that battle in another hadith, where he spoke of the courage of the Muslims. Groups of Muslims will follow one another in fighting until victory or death for three consecutive days. It seems that the number of Muslims in those days will be few, based on the fact that the Muslims will be waiting for reinforcements to reach them from the rest of the Muslims. In Muslim it is narrated that 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood said: "The Hour will not begin until inheritance is no longer shared out and there is no joy in the spoils of war." Then he gestured with his hand (towards Syria) and said: "An enemy will gather against the people of Islam, and the people of Islam will gather against them."[28] I (the narrator) said, "The Romans, you mean?" He said, "Yes. At that time there will be a terrible fight and the Muslims will prepare a detachment for fighting unto death, so that they do not return unless they are

[26] This is a different conquest, other than that achieved by Muhammad al-Faatiḥ

[27] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Fatḥ al-Qusṭanṭeeniyyah*, 4/2221, hadith no. 2897

[28] i.e., to wage war and fight. This will be after the betrayal of the Romans referred to in the previous hadith.

victorious. They will fight until night intervenes. Both sides will return to their camps and neither will be victorious; the Muslim detachment will be wiped out. The Muslims will again prepare a detachment for fighting unto death, so that they do not return unless they are victorious. They will fight until night intervenes. Both sides will return to their camps and neither will be victorious; the Muslim detachment will be wiped out. The Muslims will prepare a (third) detachment for fighting unto death, so that they return not unless they are victorious. They will fight until evening. Both sides will return to their camps and neither will be victorious; the Muslim detachment will be wiped out. On the fourth day, the remaining Muslims will attack, and Allah will cause the enemy to be routed. There will be such fighting the like of which will never be seen (or has never been seen), such that if a bird were to pass by their flanks, it would not reach the end of them before falling down dead. Out of one hundred related persons, only one man will be left alive. So what joy will there be in the spoils of war, and what inheritance will be divided? Whilst they will be in this state, they will hear of a calamity even greater than that. There will be shout, 'The *Dajjaal* has taken your place among your offspring.' So they will throw down whatever will be in their hands and go forward, sending ten horsemen ahead as scouting party." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'I know their names, and the names of their fathers, and the colours of their horses. They will be the best horsemen on the face of the earth that day, or among the best horsemen on the face of the earth that day.'"[29]

More details about the conquest of Constantinople, which is mentioned in the hadith about the great battle which we quoted first,

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[29] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Iqbaal ar-Rum fi Kathrat al-Qatl*, 4/2223, no. 2899

are to be found in the hadith narrated by Muslim, also from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ), who said, "The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

> 'Have you heard of a city, part of which is on land and part in the sea[30]?' They said, 'Yes, O' Messenger of Allah.' He said, 'The Hour will not come until seventy thousand of the sons of Isḥaaq[31] attack it. When they come there they will camp, and they will not fight with weapons or shoot arrows. They will say, *Laa ilaaha illallah wa Allahu akbar*, and one of its two sides will fall.'"

Thawr[32] said, "I only know that he said, 'That part which is in the sea (will fall)." [The Prophet (ﷺ) said:]

> Then they will say a second time, '*Laa ilaaha illallah wa Allahu akbar*,' and the other side will fall. Then they will say a third time, '*Laa ilaaha illallah wa Allahu akbar*,' and the gates will

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[30] The scholars thought that this city was Constantinople, even though the Prophet did not mention it by name. It occurred to me that this city might be Venice in Italy, because a large number of its houses are built on the sea, and a part of it is on land. I examined both cities when I visited them, and I think that Venice more closely matches the description given in the hadith. And Allah knows best. (Author)

[31] An-Nawawi said in his commentary on Muslim (18/44): "Al-Qaaḍi said: this is how it appears in all versions of Muslim, 'Banu Isḥaaq (the sons of Isḥaaq)'. Some of the scholars said, the more common and usual phrase is 'Banu Ismaa'eel (the sons of Ismaa'eel).' This is what is indicated by the context of the hadith, as what is meant is surely the Arabs..." I say that there is no conflict here, *Insha Allah*, because this religion is for all people, and Allah gives dominion to whomsoever He wills. Muhammad al-Faatiḥ conquered Constantinople more than three hundred years after An-Nawawi's time, and most of his troops were non-Arabs. It is not unlikely that something like this may happen again; the hadith about the great battle quoted above indicates that. Then the Romans will say to the Muslims, Let us fight those whom you took prisoner then they became Muslims.

[32] Thawr ibn Zayd ad-Dayli, one of the narrators of this hadith.

be opened for them. They will enter it and take the booty. Whilst they will be dividing the spoils of war, the shout will reach them, 'The *Dajjaal* has emerged!' They will leave everything and go back."[33]

(4) Drought and famine before the emergence of the *Dajjaal*

The people will be subjected to a severe test just before the *Dajjaal* appears. The sky will withhold its rain and the earth will withhold its vegetation. In *Sunan Ibn Maajah*, *Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Khuzaymah* and *Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim* it is narrated from Abu Umaamah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "Before the *Dajjaal* emerges there will be three difficult years in which the people will suffer intense hunger. In the first year, Allah will command the sky to withhold one-third of its rain, and He will command the earth to withhold one-third of its vegetation. In the second year, He will command the sky to withhold two-thirds of its rain, and the earth to withhold two-thirds of its vegetation. In the third year He will command the sky to withhold all of its rain, and not a drop will fall, and the earth to withhold all of its vegetation. So no plants will grow and no cloven-footed animals will remain; they will all die except those whom Allah wills." It was said, "What will keep the people alive at that time?" He said, "*Tahleel* (saying *Laa ilaaha illallah*), *Takbeer* (saying, *Allahu akbar*) and *Taḥmeed* (saying *Al-ḥamdu Lillaah*). They will take the place of food for them."[34]

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[33] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan*, 4/2238, no. 2920

[34] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'*, 6/277, no. 7752

(5) The attributes and characteristics of the *Dajjaal*

The *Dajjaal* will claim to be divine, and he will produce extraordinary feats to propagate his falsehood. A man will come thinking that he will not be deceived and that his falsehood will have no effect on him, but when he sees his extraordinary feats he will follow him. In *Sunan Abi Dawood* it is narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from 'Imraan ibn Ḥusayn that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> "Whoever hears of the *Dajjaal*, let him keep away from him, for by Allah a man will come to him thinking himself to be a believer, then he will follow him, because of the doubts that he stirs up."[35]

Whoever examines the issue of the *Dajjaal* thoroughly and with insight will know for sure that he is an imposter and that the attributes of divinity are not present in him. He is a poor, incapable human being, despite the extraordinary feats that he performs. He eats, drinks and sleeps; he urinates and defecates. How can one who is such be a god worthy to be worshipped, or the lord of creation when he is in need of it?

Although this is quite obvious, the Messenger (ﷺ) also gave us a lot of information about his attributes and features, so that the believers in whose time he will emerge will recognize him, and will be able to confront him without being deceived by his falsehood.

General description

The Messenger (ﷺ) described the prominent characteristics of his personality and his physical appearance. In Bukhari it is narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar that the Messenger (ﷺ) saw the *Dajjaal* in a dream, and described him as "a well-built man, with a reddish

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[35] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/354, hadith no. 7846

complexion and curly hair, and one-eyed, as if his eye is a floating grape... The person who resembled him most is Ibn Qaṭan from (the tribe of) Khuzaa'ah."[36]

In *Musnad Aḥmad* and *Sunan Abi Dawood* it is narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad that 'Ubaadah ibn aṣ-Ṣaamit related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'I have told you so much about the *Dajjaal* that I am afraid that you may be confused. The *Dajjaal* is a short man, with his toes turned in, curly-haired, one-eyed, with one eye abraded, neither prominent nor sunken. If you get confused, then know that your Lord is not one-eyed, and that you will not see your Lord.'"[37]

In *Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Ḥibbaan* and *Musnad Aḥmad* it is narrated that Ibn 'Abbaas (رضي الله عنه) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'The *Dajjaal* is one-eyed, white with a reddish complexion, as if his head is a huge snake. He resembles 'Abd al-'Uzza ibn Qaṭan most. Even though many people will be doomed because of him, know that your Lord is not one-eyed.'"[38]

The *Dajjaal* will be one-eyed

The Messenger (ﷺ) focused on describing the eyes of the *Dajjaal*, because no matter what features the *Dajjaal* may be able to rid himself of, he cannot rid himself of his eyes. The eyes are prominent and obvious, and everyone can see them; their features cannot be

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[36] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/90

[37] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 2/318, no. 2455. "With his toes turned in" refers to a manner of walking caused by a physical defect, either because the lower legs are crooked or the thighs are too far apart, or some other reason.

[38] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 3/190, hadith no. 1193. Shaykh Naaṣir said: "It is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of Muslim."

concealed. The *ahaadeeth* quoted above point to some faults in his eyes, the clearest of which is that he will be one-eyed. In some *ahaadeeth* it states that the blind eye will be the right; in other *ahaadeeth* it says that it is the left eye which will be blind. It is more likely that it will be the right eye, because the *ahaadeeth* which state that are agreed upon and narrated by Bukhari and Muslim. The Messenger (ﷺ) likened that eye to a floating grape. According to another hadith, he described the blind right eye as sticking out and not concealed, like a gob of spit on a smoothly-plastered wall.

In Bukhari it is narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar that the Prophet (ﷺ) said of the *Dajjaal*,

> "He is blind in his right eye, as if it is a floating grape."[39]

According to the hadith of Abu Sa'eed narrated by Aḥmad, "His right eye is blind and sticks out, it cannot be concealed. It is like a gob of spit on a smoothly-plastered wall. And his left eye is like a shining star."[40]

Despite that it is abraded, as stated above. In Muslim it says, "The *Dajjaal* has one eye abraded."[41]

An-Nawawi interpreted these reports differently. He thought that all the reports which described both eyes as defective were *ṣaḥeeḥ*. The Arabic word *'awar* (translated in many cases as "blind") means a fault or defect, and both of the *Dajjaal's* eyes will be defective. It is narrated that the defective eye will be the right eye, and it is narrated that the defective eye will be the left eye. It is narrated that one of them will be *ṭaafi'ah* (extinguished), i.e., it will have no light in it;

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[39] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/90; Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2247

[40] *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/98

[41] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2248, no. 2933

and it is narrated that the other will be *ṭaafiyah* without hamza (floating), i.e., protruding. So according to An-Nawawi's interpretation, one of his eyes will not see anything because its light is gone; this is abraded, neither protruding nor sunken. The other will not be without light, but it will be defective in some other manner, it will be protruding.[42] In one of the reports narrated by Muslim it says that the eye which has lost its light and is abraded will be covered by a thick fold of skin: "The *Dajjaal* will have one eye abraded, with a thick fold of skin over it."[43] This thick fold of skin is skin that prevents one from seeing. Al-Aṣma'i said: it is flesh that grows at the edge of the eyeball.

The Messenger (ﷺ) described for us the eye with which he will be able to see. He said:

> "The eye of the *Dajjaal* is green like glass." This has been narrated by Aḥmad and Abu Na'eem with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad.[44]

Written between his eyes is "*kaafir*"

There is a sign by which Allah will make the *Dajjaal* recognizable to every believer, to the exclusion of others, whom Allah will make blind (to this sign). This sign is something written between his eyes: "*kaa' faa' raa*'" or "*kaafir.*" In Bukhari it is narrated from Anas that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "No Prophet has ever been sent but he warned his nation about the one-eyed liar. Verily he is one-eyed, and your Lord is not one-eyed, and between his eyes is written '*kaafir.*'"[45]

[42] *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/61

[43] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan*, 4/2249, hadith no. 2934

[44] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaheeḥah*, 4/477, hadith no. 1863

[45] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/90

In Muslim there is a report similar to that narrated by Bukhari, but he said: "Between his eyes is written '*kaa' faa' raa'*."[46]

In *Ṣaḥeeḥ ibn Khuzaymah, Sunan ibn Maajah* and *Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim* it is narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from Abu Umaamah: "Written between his eyes is '*kaafir*'. Every believer will read it, whether he is literate or illiterate."[47]

In Muslim it says: "Written between his eyes is '*kaafir*', which everyone who hates what he does will read, or every believer will read."[48]

"The correct view of the reputed scholars, such as an-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) is that this writing is to be understood as writing in a real sense. It is real writing which Allah will make as one of the definitive signs of his *kufr*, lies and falsehood. Allah will make it visible to every Muslim, literate or illiterate, but He will conceal it from everyone whom He wills is to be doomed and led astray by him. There is no reason why this should not be possible. Al-Qaaḍi mentioned that there was some scholarly dispute concerning this: some of them said that it is real writing as we have mentioned, whilst others said that it is a metaphor referring to some feature that will appear in him, based on the fact that the Prophet (ﷺ) said that it will be read by every believer, literate or illiterate. But this is a weak view."[49]

He will not have any offspring

The Messenger (ﷺ) told us that the *Dajjaal* will be "sterile; no children will be born to him." This is narrated by Muslim.[50]

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[46] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2248, hadith no. 2933

[47] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'*, 6/274, no. 7752

[48] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr Ibn Ṣayyaad*, 4/2245

[49] *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/60

[50] Muslim, 4/2242-2243

(6) The falsehood of his claim to lordship

If these are the attributes of the *Dajjaal*, attributes in which there are many shortcomings, then how can this weak creature claim to be a lord? He will claim that he is the lord of mankind, but the Lord of Mankind will not be seen in this world. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Know that no one among you will see his Lord until he dies."[51] Moreover, he will be physically unsound, with obvious deformities, including his being one-eyed. Concerning that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Allah cannot be confused with anyone else. Allah is not one-eyed,' - and he pointed to his eyes with his hand - "but the Pseudo-Christ - *Dajjaal* will be blind in his right eye, as if his eye is a floating grape."[52]

Another of his defective attributes is that he will be *afḥaj* (will walk with his toes turned in), i.e., his calves or his thighs will be too far apart. Or it is said that this means pigeon-toed with the heels too far apart, or that the legs are somewhat crooked.[53]

Ibn al-'Arabi was right when he said: "From the various defective attributes of the *Dajjaal* it is clear that he cannot even rid himself of these defects and that he is subjugated with regard to his physical shape."[54] He meant that if he were a lord, he would be able to remove the shortcoming in his body. The fact that he is unable to do so indicates that he is subjugated to the Lord of the Worlds and is unable to rid himself of his defects.

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[51] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan*, 4/2245

[52] Bukhari, *Kitaab at-Tawḥeed, Baab Qawl Allah, ﴾Wa li tuṣna'a 'ala 'ayni﴿*, *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/389

[53] *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/97

[54] *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/98

The Messenger (ﷺ) focused on his being one-eyed "because being one-eyed is a visible sign which will be recognized by the scholar and the ordinary man, and by those who cannot follow rational arguments."[55] But those who are knowledgeable will be able to recognize him and see him for what he really is.

(7) The *Dajjaal's* ability to create *fitnah* (tribulation, trial)

The *Dajjaal* will claim to be divine, and he will be given the ability to perform astounding feats which will be a great trial for the people. These will include the following:

(i) The ability to travel rapidly throughout the earth:

According to the hadith of an-Nawaas ibn Sam'aan in Muslim, the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked about the speed of the *Dajjaal's* movement throughout the earth. He said: "(It will be) like the clouds driven by the wind..."[56]

The Messenger (ﷺ) said that he will travel around the earth and will not leave any city without entering it. apart from Makkah and Madeenah. According to the hadith of Anas narrated in Bukhari and Muslim, "There will be no city which the *Dajjaal* will not enter apart from Makkah and Madeenah."[57]

According to the hadith of Abu Umaamah narrated by Ibn Maajah, Ibn Khuzaymah and Al-Ḥaakim, "He will not leave any part of the earth without entering it and prevailing over it, apart from Makkah and Madeenah. He will not approach any of their gates but he will be met by angels with unsheathed swords."[58]

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[55] *Ibid*, 13/96

[56] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2252, no. 2937

[57] *Ṣaheeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 5/99, hadith no. 5309

[58] *Ṣaheeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/275, no. 7752

(ii) His paradise and his fire

One of the things with which the *Dajjaal* will confuse the people will be the fact that he will have with him things that look like a paradise and a Hell and things that look like a river of water and a river of fire. These things will not be as they seem to the people, for that which they think is fire will be cool water, and that which they think is cool water will be fire.

In Muslim it is narrated that Ḥudhayfah (ﷺ) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "With him (i.e., the *Dajjaal*) will be a paradise and a Hell, but his Hell (fire) will be paradise and his paradise will be Hell (fire).'"[59]

In Bukhari and Muslim it is narrated also from Ḥudhayfah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said concerning the *Dajjaal*: "He will have with him water and fire, but his fire will be cool water and his water will be fire." The report by Muslim adds: "So do not expose yourself to ruin."[60]

According to a report narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*, Ḥudhayfah (ﷺ) related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'I am the most knowledgeable about what the *Dajjaal* will have with him. He will have two rivers, one will appear to be white water, and another will appear to a raging fire. If anyone is put to that test, let him go to the one which he thinks is fire, then let him close his eyes, tilt his head and drink from it, for it is cool water.'"[61]

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[59] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2248, hadith no. 2934

[60] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/90; Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2249, hadith no. 2934

[61] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2249, hadith no. 2934

According to another report in Muslim, also from Ḥudhayfah: "The *Dajjaal* will emerge and with him there will be water and fire. What the people will think water will be burning fire, and what the people will think to be fire will be cool, sweet water. Whoever among you is put to that test, let him jump into that which he thinks is fire, for it is good, sweet water."[62]

It is clear from the texts that the people will not know the real nature of that which the *Dajjaal* has with him. What they see will not be real, in fact it will be the opposite of what it appears to be. Hence in some of the *aḥaadeeth* narrated in Muslim it says: "He will bring with him something like paradise and hell; the one which he says is paradise will in fact be hell."[63]

(iii) He will seek the help of the *shayaaṭeen*

Undoubtedly the *Dajjaal* will seek the help of the *shayaaṭeen*. It is known that the *shayaaṭeen* do not serve anyone except the one who is the most untruthful and misguided, and who is enslaved to something other than Allah. In *Sunan ibn Maajah, Ṣaḥeeḥ ibn Khuzaymah* and *Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim* it is narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from Abu Umaamah: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Part of his *fitnah* will be that he will say to a Bedouin, 'Do you think that if I resurrect your father and your mother for you, you will bear witness that I am your lord?' He will say, 'Yes.' Then a *shayṭaan* will appear to him in the form of his father and mother, and will say, My son, follow him, for he is your lord.'"[64]

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[62] *Ibid*, 4/2250, 2935

[63] *Ibid*, hadith no. 2936

[64] *Ṣaheeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/274, no. 7752

(iv) Inanimate objects and animals will respond to his commands

Among the trials with which Allah will test His slaves is that the *Dajjaal* will command the sky to send down rain, and it will do so; he will command the earth to bring forth its vegetation, and it will do so. He will call the animals and they will follow him. He will command the ruins to bring forth their buried treasure and they will respond. In Muslim it is narrated from an-Nawaas ibn Sam'aan that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "He will come to the people and call them, and they will believe in him and respond to him. He will command the sky to send down rain, and it will do so; he will command the earth to bring forth its vegetation, and it will do so. In the evening their livestock will come back to them with their humps high, their udders full of milk and their flanks stretched. Then he will come to some other people and call them, but they will reject what he says. He will leave them and they will suffer drought and have nothing left of their wealth. He will pass through the wasteland and say to it, 'Bring forth your treasure,' and its treasure will follow him like a swarm of bees."[65]

(v) He will kill that young man then bring him back to life

Another of his *fitnahs* will be that he will kill that believer - or so it will appear to the people - then he will claim that he has brought him back to life. In Bukhari it is narrated that Abu Sa'eed said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) spoke to us at length about the *Dajjaal*. One of the things that he told us was, 'The *Dajjaal* will come, and it will be forbidden for him to enter the gates of Madeenah. So he will camp at one of the barren tracts near Madeenah. On that day a man will go out to meet him who is the best of mankind or one of the best of

[65] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2252, no. 2937.

mankind, and will say, "I bear witness that you are the *Dajjaal* of whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) told us." The *Dajjaal* will say, "Do you think that if I kill this man then bring him back to life, will you have any doubts concerning the matter?" They will say, "No." So he will kill him, then bring him back to life. He (the man) will say, "By Allah, I have never been more sure about you than I am today." The *Dajjaal* will want to kill him but he will not be able to.'"[66]

Muslim also narrated it from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, with the wording: "The *Dajjaal* will emerge, and a man from among the believers will set out to confront him. He will be met by the guards of the *Dajjaal*, who will ask him, 'Where are you going?' He will say, 'I am going to this man who has emerged.' They will say to him, 'Do you not believe in our lord?' He will say, 'We know our Lord full well.' They will say, 'Kill him!' Then one of them will say to another, 'Didn't he forbid us to kill anyone without consulting him?' So they will take him to the *Dajjaal*, and when the believer sees him, he will say, 'O people! This is the *Dajjaal* of whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) spoke!'

The *Dajjaal* will give orders that he be laid out on his stomach, then he will say, 'Take him and beat him.' He will be beaten severely on his back and stomach, then he (the *Dajjaal*) will say, 'Do you not believe in me?' He (the believer) will say, 'You are the false *messiaḥ*.' Then he (the *Dajjaal*) will issue orders that he be split with a saw from the parting in his hair to between his legs. Then the *Dajjaal* will walk between the two pieces, then he will say to him, 'Get up,' and he will stand up. Then he (the *Dajjaal*) will say to him, 'Do you believe in me?' He (the believer) will say, "I am only more

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[66] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Laa yadkhul ad-Dajjaal al-Madeenah, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/101; Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Sifat ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2256, hadith no. 2938. This version of the hadith is narrated by Bukhari.

certain about you.' He will say, 'O' people, he will not be able to kill anyone after me.' The *Dajjaal* will seize him to kill him, but (a shield of) copper will be placed between his neck and collarbone, and he will not be able to do anything to him. He will take him by his hands and legs and cast him aside, and the people will think that he has thrown him into the Fire, but he will thrown into Paradise.'" The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "He will be the greatest martyr in the sight of the Lord of the Worlds."[67]

(8) Where will he emerge from

The *Dajjaal* will emerge in the east, from the land of the Persians called Khuraasaan. According to the hadith narrated by Tirmidhi, Ibn Maajah, Al-Ḥaakim, Aḥmad and Aḍ-Ḍiyaa' in *Al-Mukhtaarah*, Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (ﷺ) stated: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) told us,

> 'The *Dajjaal* will emerge from a land in the east called Khuraasaan, and his followers will be people with faces like flattened shields.'"[68]

But who he really is will become apparent to the Muslims when he reaches a place between 'Iraq and Syria. According to a hadith in Muslim, from an-Nawaas ibn Sam'aan and attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ), "He will emerge from between Syria and 'Iraq, and will spread mischief right and left. O' slaves of Allah, stand firm."[69]

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[67] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab fi Ṣifat ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2256, hadith no. 2938

[68] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaheeḥah*, 4/122, hadith no. 1591. Shaykh Naaṣir said: 'Al-Ḥaakim said, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*, and Adh-Dhahabi agreed with him. It is as they said.'

[69] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2252, hadith no. 2937

(9) How long he will remain on earth

The *Ṣaḥaabah* asked the Messenger (ﷺ) how long the *Dajjaal* would remain on earth. They said, "What will be the length of his stay on earth?" He said, "Forty days, one day like a year, one day like a month, one day like a week and the rest of his days like your days." We asked, "O' Messenger of Allah, on that day which will be like a year, will the prayers of one day be sufficient?" He said, "No, work it out." This is narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* and by Abu Dawood in his *Sunan*, from An-Nawaas ibn Sam'aan.[70]

The Messenger's response to the *Ṣaḥaabah's* question about whether five prayers would be sufficient on the days which would be like a year or a month or a week, indicates that that day will indeed be so long that it becomes a year, or a month, or a week; this is not a metaphor.

(10) The followers of the *Dajjaal*

The *Dajjaal*, the false *messiah*, the one-eyed liar, will be the king for whom the Jews are waiting so that they may rule the world during his era. In *Musnad Aḥmad* it is narrated from 'Uthmaan ibn Abil-'Aaṣ (ﷺ) that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

> "Most of the followers of the *Dajjaal* will be Jews and women."[71]

According to the hadith of Anas ibn Maalik narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The *Dajjaal* will be followed by seventy thousand Jews of Isbahaan, wearing cloaks."[72]

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[70] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/345, hadith no. 7839. It is also narrated in Muslim, in *Kitaab al-Fitan*, 4/2252, hadith no. 2137

[71] *Musnad Aḥmad*, 4/216-217

[72] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab fi Baqiyat min Aḥaadeeth ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2266, hadith no. 2944

Abu Na'eem mentioned that one of the villages connected to the city of Isbaahan used to be called Al-Yahoodiyyah, because it was inhabited only by Jews. It remained so until the time of Ayyoob ibn Ziyaad, the governor of Egypt at the time of Al-Mahdi ibn Manṣoor al-'Abbaasi, when Muslims started to live there, and a part of it was left for the Jews.[73]

The name by which the *Dajjaal* is known to the Jews is Al-Maseeḥ ibn Dawood (the Messiah son of David). They claim that he will emerge at the end of time and that his dominion will extend over land and sea, and that the rivers will flow with him. They claim that he is one of the signs of God, who will restore dominion to them.[74] Their claims are false; rather he will be the messiaḥ of misguidance, and the *Messiaḥ* of guidance is 'Eesa ibn Maryam (Jesus son of Mary), who will kill the *Dajjaal*, the false *messiaḥ*, and his Jewish followers.

(11) Madeenah and Makkah will be protected from the *Dajjaal*

The *Dajjaal* will head for Madeenah, but he will not be able to enter it, because Allah has protected Makkah and Madeenah against the *Dajjaal* and the plague, and He has appointed His angels to guard them. In Bukhari it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah and attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) that "Over the mountain passes of Madeenah there are angels. The plague and the *Dajjaal* will not enter it."[75] Bukhari also narrated from Anas, and attributed it to the Prophet (ﷺ), that "the terror of the *Dajjaal* will not enter Madeenah. On that day it will have seven gates, over each there will be two angels (to guard)."[76]

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[73] *Lawaami' al-Anwaar al-Bahiyyah*, 2/107

[74] *Ibid*, 2/112

[75] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Laa yadkhul ad-Dajjaal al Madeenah, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/101

[76] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/90

In *Sunan at-Tirmidhi* and *Musnad Aḥmad* it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah that "the *Dajjaal* will come from the east, heading for Madeenah. When he will reach behind Uḥud, he will be met by the angels. They will strike his face and turn it towards Syria, and there he will be destroyed, there he will be destroyed." Tirmidhi said, (it is) a *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith.[77]

In Bukhari and Muslim it is narrated that Anas stated: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "There is no city that the *Dajjaal* will not enter, except Makkah and Madeenah. There is no mountain pass of these cities which does not have angels surrounding it and guarding it. He will camp in one of the barren tracts[78], and Madeenah and its inhabitants will be shaken by three earthquakes, then every *kaafir* and hypocrite in the city will go out to join him."[79]

In *Sunan Ibn Maajah*, *Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Khuzaymah* and *Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim* it is narrated from Abu Umaamah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "There will be no area of the earth which he does not enter and prevail over, except Makkah and Madeenah. He will not approach any of their mountain passes but he will be met by angels with unsheathed swords, until he camps at Aḍ-Ḍareeb al-Aḥmar, at the edge of the barren tract. Then Madeenah and its inhabitants will be shaken with three earthquakes, and no hypocrite, man or woman, will be left there; they will go out to join him. Evil will be eliminated from it (Madeenah) just as

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[77] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 4/372, no. 1771. The editor said, its isnad meets the conditions of Muslim. It is also narrated by Muslim, divided in two separate places.

[78] These are sandy areas where nothing grows, because of the salinity of the ground. Some areas around Madeenah are like that.

[79] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'*, 5/99, no. 5306

dross is eliminated from iron by the bellows. That day will be called *Al-khalaas* (purification)." It was asked, "Where will the Arabs be on that day?" He said, "On that day they will be few..."[80]

(12) How to save oneself from the *Dajjaal*

We have mentioned above that just before the *Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ) appears, the Muslims will be very strong and will fight great wars from which they will emerge victorious. The *Dajjaal* will come to put an end to the Muslims' power which will have defeated the greatest state of that time, the Romans. The Muslims will have taken back Constantinople, and will have conquered it. The *Shayṭaan* will shout that the *Dajjaal* has taken their place among their families, so they will abandon the booty and return to their homes. Then the *Dajjaal* will emerge, and the Muslims will not put down their weapons. So when 'Eesa (Jesus) descends, he will find the Muslims "preparing to fight, and forming ranks."[81] Undoubtedly every Muslim at that time will have to join the Muslim forces who will be carrying the banner of jihaad for the sake of Allah, and will have to stand firm in the truth no matter how severe the test. This is what our Messenger (ﷺ) has advised us to do. He told us about the emergence of the *Dajjaal* and said: "He will emerge between Syria and 'Iraq, and will spread mischief right and left. O' slaves of Allah, stand firm."[82]

It will not be permissible for a Muslim to approach the *Dajjaal* even if he feels sure of himself, because he will bring specious arguments which will shake a person's faith. In *Sunan Abi Dawood* it is narrated

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[80] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/275, no. 7752

[81] Muslim, 4/2221, hadith no. 2897

[82] Muslim, 4/2252, hadith no. 2937

with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from 'Imraan ibn Ḥuṣayn that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> "Whoever hears of the *Dajjaal*, let him keep away from him. For by Allah, a man may come to him thinking that he is a believer, then he will follow him, because of the specious arguments that he produces for him."[83]

There is nothing wrong with those, who cannot resist him, fleeing from him. This is what many people will do at that time. In Muslim it is narrated that Umm Shurayk stated, "I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say,

> 'The people will flee from the *Dajjaal* into the mountains.'"[84]

If a believer is forced to confront him then he has to take responsibility and speak up for the truth, producing good arguments. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "If he emerges whilst I am still among you, then I will take care of him for you. But if he emerges when I am not among you, each one will have to argue for himself, and Allah will take care of every Muslim for me." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) left behind knowledge to give us a clear insight about the *Dajjaal*: he will have a physical body and will eat and drink, whereas Allah will not be seen in this world, and He is above having any need for food and drink. The *Dajjaal* will have defective eyes, as stated in the hadith: "He will be a young man with curly hair, and a blind eye. He resembles 'Abd al-'Uzza ibn Qaṭan most."[85]

If he is like that, then his claims to divinity and lordship must be false, and obviously fabricated. The Messenger (ﷺ) commanded those who encounter him to recite the opening verses of *Soorat al-*

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[83] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/354, hadith no. 7846

[84] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab fi Baqiyyat Aḥaadeeth ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2266, hadith no. 2944

[85] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2252, hadith no. 3937

Kahf (the 18th chapter of the Qur'an) over him. "Whoever among you encounters him, let him recite over him the opening verses of *Soorat al-Kahf*."[86] According to the hadith of Abu Umaamah, "Part of his tribulation will be that he will have with him a paradise and a fire (Hell). His fire will be a paradise and his paradise will be a fire (Hell). Whoever is tested with his fire, let him seek the help of Allah and recite the opening verses of *al-Kahf*..."[87]

In the *ṣaḥeeḥ aḥaadeeth* it says: "Whoever memorizes ten verses of *Soorat al-Kahf* will be protected from the tribulation of the *Dajjaal*."[88] Some reports mention the first ten verses of *Soorat al-Kahf* and some mention the last ten verses.

It may be asked, why do the first ten or last ten verses of *Soorat al-Kahf* offer protection against the *Dajjaal*?

Some scholars said: because at the beginning of this soorah Allah described how He protected those young men from the evil tyrant who wanted to kill them, so it is appropriate to recite these verses in a similar situation, so that one may be saved as they were saved.

Or it was said that it is because in the first verses mention is made of wonders and signs which will strengthen the heart of the reader so that he will not be tempted by the *Dajjaal*, and he will not be dazzled by what the *Dajjaal* does; this will not distract him or affect him.

Another way in which the Muslim will be able to protect himself from the *Dajjaal* will be to flee to one of the two Noble Sanctuaries, Makkah or Madeenah, for the *Dajjaal* is forbidden to enter them.

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86 *Ibid.*

87 Ibn Maajah, Tirmidhi and Al-Ḥaakim with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad. *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'*, 6/674, no. 7752

88 *An-Nihaayah* by Ibn Katheer, 1/154. Some of these are narrated in *As-Sunan* and some in the books of *Ṣaḥeeḥ*.

The Messenger (ﷺ) has described to us how that righteous man will confront the *Dajjaal*, and how he will speak up for the truth and will not speak softly. We have also quoted above the *aḥaadeeth* which describe the reality of the paradise and hell (fire) which the *Dajjaal* will have with him.

Another way in which a person may save himself from the *Dajjaal* is to turn to Allah and seek His protection from the *Dajjaal* and from his *fitnah*. The *aḥaadeeth* command the Muslim to seek refuge with Allah from the *fitnah* of the *Dajjaal*. In Bukhari it is narrated that 'Aa'ishah (رضي الله عنها) stated: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) seeking refuge in his prayer from the *fitnah* of the *Dajjaal*."[89]

The Messenger (ﷺ) always used to seek refuge with Allah from the *fitnah* of the *Dajjaal* after reciting the *Tashahhud*. He would say, "*Allahumma innaa na'oodhu bika min 'adhaab Jahannam, wa min 'adhaab al-qabri, wa min fitnat al-maḥyaa wal-mamaat, wa min fitnat al-maseeḥ ad-dajjaal* (O' Allah, we seek refuge in You from the torment of Hell, the torment of the grave, the trials of life and death and the tribulation of the *Dajjaal*)."[90]

(13) His destruction and the end of his tribulation; the destruction of his Jew followers

We have quoted in full the hadith narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* from Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), at the end of which it states that the destruction of the *Dajjaal* will come at the hands of 'Eesa ibn Maryam: "Whilst they (the Muslim army) will be preparing to fight, or will be forming rows, then the *iqaamah* for prayer will be said. 'Eesa ibn Maryam will descend and lead them to fight the Pseudo-

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[89] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/90

[90] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Janaa'iz, Baab at-Ta'awwudh Billaahi min 'Adhaab al-Qabr*; Muslim, in *Baab Ma yusta'aadh minhu fis-Ṣalaah*.

Christ - the *Dajjaal*. When the enemy of Allah sees him, he will melt like salt in water. If 'Eesa were to leave him alone he would melt away completely, but Allah will kill him at his hands, and he will show them his blood on his spear."[91]

In *Sunan ibn Maajah*, *Ṣaḥeeḥ ibn Khuzaymah* and *Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim*, it is narrated from Abu Umaamah with a *ṣaḥeeḥ.* isnad that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Their leader (i.e., the leader of the Muslims who will be preparing to fight the *Dajjaal*) will be a righteous man. When he would step forward to lead them in *Fajr* prayer, 'Eesa ibn Maryam will come down to them. That Imam will step back so that 'Eesa may come forward (to lead the prayer). 'Eesa will put his hand between his shoulders and say to him, 'Go forward and lead the prayer, for the *iqaamah* was said for you.' So their Imam will lead them in prayer, and when he has finished, 'Eesa will say, 'Open the gates.' They will open them, and behind them will be the *Dajjaal*, accompanied by seventy thousand Jews, all of them carrying adorned swords. When the *Dajjaal* will see him, will start to melt like salt in water, and he will run away... ('Eesa) will catch hold of him at the eastern gate of *Ludd* [92], and will kill him. Allah will defeat the Jews, and there will be nothing that Allah has created that a Jew hides behind, but Allah will cause that thing to speak - no rock, no tree, no wall and no animal, apart from the box-thorn (*al-gharqad*), which is one of their trees and will not speak, (everything else) will say, 'O' Muslim slave of Allah, here is a Jew, come and kill him.'"[93]

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[91] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Fatḥ al-Qusṭanṭeeniyyah*, 4/2221, hadith no. 2897

[92] *Ludd* (Lod) - a famous city in Palestine, near Ramlah.

[93] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/276, no. 7752

It is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not come until the Muslims fight the Jews, and the Muslims kill them, a Jew will try to hide behind a rock or a tree, and the rock or tree will say, 'O' Muslim, O' slave of Allah, here is a Jew behind me. Come and kill him' - apart from the box-thorn (*al-gharqad*)[94], which is one of the trees of the Jews."[95]

(14) The belief of *Ahl as-Sunnah* concerning the *Dajjaal*

An-Nawawi said in his commentary on Muslim, "Al-Qaadi said: these *ahaadeeth* that were quoted by Muslim and others concerning the story of the *Dajjaal* form proof for and confirm the view of the people of truth (i.e., *Ahl as-Sunnah*) that his (*Dajjaal*) existence is real. He is a person by means of whom Allah will test His slaves, and whom He will enable to do things that only Allah can do, such as raising the dead person whom he has killed, and causing the world to prosper and the land to be fertile; he will have a paradise and a Hell (fire) with him, and two rivers; the treasure of the earth will follow him; he will command the sky to send down rain and it will rain; he will command the earth to bring forth its produce and it will bring it forth. All of that will happen by the will and decree of Allah. Then after that Allah will make him incapable, so he will not be able to kill that man or anyone else; He will put an end to his deceit. 'Eesa (ﷺ)

[94] An-Nawawi said in his commentary on Muslim (18/45): the box-thorn (*al-gharqad*) is a kind of thorny tree which is well known in the land of *Bayt al-Maqdis* (i.e., Palestine), where the Jews will be killed.

[95] The hadith about the Muslims fighting the Jews is narrated by Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Jihaad, Baab Qitaal al-Yahood. Fath al-Baari*, 6/103. Also narrated by Muslim in his *Saheeh, Kitaab al-Fitan wa Ashraat as-Saa'ah*, hadith no. 2922, 4/2239. They both narrated it from Abu Hurayrah and Ibn 'Umar with more than one isnad. The version which we have quoted above was narrated by Muslim.

will kill him and Allah will make the believers stand firm. This is the view of *Ahl as-Sunnah*, and of all the *muḥadditheen*, *fuqahaa* and commentators. This is in contrast to those who denied the *Dajjaal*, such as the *Khawaarij*, *Jahamiyyah* and some of the *Mu'tazilah*, and it is in contrast to Bukhari al-Mu'tazili[96] and those among the *Jahamiyyah* and others who believed that the *Dajjaal's* existence is real, but that his extraordinary feats will not be real. They claim that if he would have been real, how can he be supported with miracles like those given to the Prophets, peace and blessings be upon them? This is a mistake on their part, because he will not claim to be a prophet such that the feats he does may be regarded as evidence to support him. Rather he will claim to be divine, and this claim will be shown to be false by his very condition. The evidence of his being a mere created being will be quite clear; he will be physically defective, and incapable of removing the defects in his eyes or the sign of his *kufr* written between his eyes. For these reasons and others, no one will be deceived by him except the most insignificant people, either because they will be poor and needy, or because they will fear his persecution, because his tribulation will be so great and will dazzle the people. He will travel so rapidly from place to place that he will not stay anywhere long enough for these insignificant people to examine him and discover his shortcomings, so some will believe in him."[97]

(15) Ibn Ṣayyaad and the *Dajjaal*

Ibn Ṣayyaad was a man from among the Jews of Madeenah, whose name was Ṣaaf. He resembled the *Dajjaal* in many ways, and the Messenger (ﷺ) was uncertain about him. The Messenger (ﷺ) tried on more than one occasion to find out what he really was, which indicates that he did not receive revelation concerning him. Muslim

[96] This is someone other than the great scholar of hadith. (Translator)

[97] *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/58

narrated in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭaab went out with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and a group (of *Ṣaḥaabah*) to see Ibn Ṣayyaad, and they found him playing with some boys at the fortress of Banu Mughaalah. At that time Ibn Ṣayyaad was approaching puberty. He did not notice anything until the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) struck him on the back with his hand. Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to Ibn Ṣayyaad, "Do you bear witness that I am the Messenger of Allah?" Ibn Ṣayyaad looked at him and said, "I bear witness that you are the Messenger of the unlettered." Then Ibn Ṣayyaad said, "Do you bear witness that I am the Messenger of Allah?" The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) dismissed him and said, "I believe in Allah and His Messengers."[98]

Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to him, "What do you see?" Ibn Ṣayyaad said: "A truthful one and a liar come to me." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to him, "You are confused."

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) then said, "I am hiding something for you." Ibn Ṣayyaad said, "It is a *dukh*."[99] The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Be off with you! You cannot be more than you are." 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭaab said, "O' Messenger of Allah, let me strike his neck (kill him)." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to him, "If he really is the *Dajjaal*, you will not be able to kill him, and if he is not, there is nothing to be gained by killing him."[100]

The Messenger (ﷺ) went to see him on another occasion, as narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* immediately after the hadith quoted above. Saalim ibn 'Abdullah said: "I heard 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar say: after that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) set out with Ubayy ibn Ka'b al-

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[98] It may be asked, how come he claimed to be a Prophet and the Messenger left him alone? The answer is, because there was a peace treaty between the Messenger and the Jews at that time.

[99] The Prophet was concealing *Soorat ad-Dukhaan* from him. (Translator)

[100] Muslim, 4/2244, no. 2930

Anṣaari to the date palm trees where Ibn Ṣayyaad was. The Messenger (ﷺ) hid behind the trunks of the trees, hoping to hear something from Ibn Ṣayyaad[101] before Ibn Sayyad saw him. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saw Ibn Ṣayyaad lying on a mattress, wrapped in a cloak and mumbling himself. The mother of Ibn Ṣayyaad saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) hiding behind the tree trunk and said to Ibn Ṣayyaad, 'O' Ṣaaf (which was the name of Ibn Ṣayyaad), here is Muhammad!' Ibn Ṣayyaad got up, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'If only she had left him alone, the matter would have become clear.'"[102]

An-Nawawi said in his commentary on Muslim concerning Ibn Ṣayyaad: "His story is somewhat problematic and confusing. Was he the infamous *Dajjaal* or not? Undoubtedly he was one of the *dajjaals* (liars or imposters). The scholars said, the apparent meaning of the *aḥaadeeth* is that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not receive any revelation (*waḥy*) to say whether he was the *Dajjaal* or not. What was revealed to him was the characteristics of the *Dajjaal*. In the case of Ibn Ṣayyaad there was only circumstantial evidence. Hence the Prophet (ﷺ) could be certain whether he was the *Dajjaal* or not, and he said to 'Umar, 'If he is really the *Dajjaal*, you will not be able to kill him.'"[103] 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭaab was certain that Ibn Ṣayyaad was the *Dajjaal*, as was 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both). Abu Dawood narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad that Ibn 'Umar used to say, "By Allah, I do not doubt that Ibn Ṣayyaad was the *Dajjaal* (the pseudo-christ)."[104]

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[101] i.e., he was hoping to eavesdrop on him and hear something that would tell him what Ibn Ṣayyaad really was.

[102] Muslim, 4/2244, no. 2931

[103] *Sharh an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/46

[104] *Ibid.*

An-Nawawi quoted Al-Bayhaqi as saying, "The hadith of Jaabir does not indicate anything more than that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not say anything in response to what 'Umar had said. It may be that he (ﷺ) was not sure about him (Ibn Ṣayyaad), then it became clear to him that he was not the *Dajjaal*, as is stated clearly in the hadith of Tameem."[105]

Ibn Ṣayyaad lived for a while after the Messenger (ﷺ) died, and claimed to have become Muslim, but the people were not sure about his Islam and they continued to have doubts about him. Ibn 'Umar - according to the reports narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* - met Ibn Ṣayyaad twice, and he said to one of those who were with him, "Are you saying that he is the one (the *Dajjaal*)?" He said, "No, by Allah." (Ibn 'Umar) said: "You are lying to me, by Allah. Some of you told me that he would not die until he had the most wealth and children among you, and they are claiming that he is like that now." Ibn 'Umar said, then we talked, and I left him. Then Ibn 'Umar met him again, when his eye was protruding. Ibn 'Umar said: "I asked him, 'When did that happen to your eye?' He said, 'I do not know.' I said, 'You do not know and it is in your own head?' Ibn Ṣayyaad said, 'If Allah willed, He could create it in this stick of yours,' then he made a sound like the worst braying of a donkey that I have ever heard. Then Ibn 'Umar said, 'My companions claimed that I beat him with a stick I had until it broke, but by Allah I did not feel a thing.'" According to another report narrated by Muslim, Ibn 'Umar said something to him that made him angry, and he was so much swollen in anger that the way was blocked. Ibn 'Umar went to Ḥafṣah and she had already heard about it. She said to him, "May Allah have mercy on you! What do you want from Ibn Ṣayyaad? Do you not know that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'He will emerge because of someone who will make him angry'?"[106]

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[105] *Ibid*, 48

[106] Muslim, 4/2247, no. 2932

Muslim also narrated that Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri said: "We went out for Ḥajj or 'Umrah, and Ibn Ṣayyaad was with us. We stopped to camp, and the people scattered. He and I were left, and I felt very nervous of him because of what was being said about him. He brought his luggage and put it with mine. I said, 'It is very hot, why don't you put your things beneath that tree?' He did that, then some sheep were brought to us. He went and got a vessel (of milk) and said, 'Drink, O' Abu Sa'eed.' I said, 'It is too hot, and the milk is hot.' The only reason I said that was because I did not want to drink anything he offered - or he said, to take anything from his hand. He said, 'Abu Sa'eed, I am thinking of taking a rope and tying it to a tree, then hanging myself because of what the people are saying about me. O' Abu Sa'eed, who has greater knowledge of the hadith of the Messenger of Allah than you Anṣaar? Didn't the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, "He is a *kaafir*," and I am a Muslim? Didn't the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, "He will be sterile and will have no children," and I have left my children behind in Madeenah? Didn't the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, "He will not enter Madeenah or Makkah," and I have come from Madeenah and am heading for Makkah?"[107]

But this evidence cited by Ibn Ṣayyaad lost its impact as far as Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri was concerned, because Ibn Ṣayyaad followed it by saying, "But, by Allah, I know where he is now, and I know his father and his mother." It was said to him, "Would you not be happy to be that man?" He said, "If it were offered to me, I would not refuse it."[108]

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[107] Muslim, 4/2242, no. 2427

[108] *Ibid.*

(16) The *Dajjaal* according to the report of Tameem ad-Daari

Muslim narrated in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* from Faaṭimah bint Qays, the sister of aḍ-Ḍaḥḥaak ibn Qays, that she heard the caller of the Messenger of Allah crying out, "*Aṣ-Ṣalaaṭu jaami'ah*," so she went out to the mosque. She said: "I prayed with the Messenger of Allah, and I was in the row of women that was directly behind the people. When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had completed his prayer, he sat on the *minbar* and he was smiling. He said, 'Let each person stay where he is.' Then he said, 'Do you know why I have brought you together?' They said, 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' He said, 'By Allah, I have not brought you together for reasons of hope or fear. I have brought you together because Tameem ad-Daari, who was a Christian, has come here, sworn allegiance to me and became Muslim. He has told me something which is in accordance with that which I have told you about the *Dajjaal* (the pseudo-christ). He told me that he was travelling on a ship, with thirty men from (the tribes of) Lakhm and Judhaam. They were tossed about by the waves of the sea for a month, then they found refuge in an island in the sea at the time of sunset. They boarded into small boats and landed on that island. There they were met by a beast whose hair was so thick that they could not tell about his face from his back, because of the quantity of hair. They said, "Woe to you, what are you?" He said, "I am Al-Jassaasah." They asked, "What is Al-Jassaasah?" He said, "O' people, look for this man in the monastery, for he is very eager to have news of you." When he named a man for us, we were afraid that he might be a devil. So we hastened to the monastery, where we found the very huge man we had ever seen, bound with fetters, with his hands tied to his neck and with iron shackles between his legs up to his ankles. We said, "Woe to you, who are you?" He said, "You will soon come to know about me, but tell me, who are you?" They

said, "We are people from Arabia. We travelled on a ship and the waves tossed us about for one month, then we took refuge in this island of yours. We boarded into the boats and came to this island. We met a beast who was so hairy that we could not tell about his face from his back, because of the quantity of hair. We said, Woe to you, who are you? He said, I am Al-Jassaasah. We asked, What is Al-Jassaasah? He said, Look for this man in the monastery, for he is very eager to have news of you. So we came to you quickly, fleeing from (that beast), because we could not be sure that it was not a devil."

He said, "Tell me about the palm trees of *Baysaan*[109]." We asked, "What shall we tell you about them?" He said, "I am asking you whether they bear fruit." We said, "Yes." He said, "Soon they will not bear fruit." He said, "Tell me about the Lake of Ṭabariyyah (Tiberias)[110]." We said. "What do you want to know about it?" He said, "Is there water in it?" They said, "It has a lot of water." He said. "Soon its water will be gone."

He said, "Tell me about the spring of Zughar[111]." They asked, "What do you want to know about it?" He said, "Do the people use its water for irrigation?" We said to him, "Yes, it has a lot of water, and the people use it for irrigation." He said, "Tell me about the Prophet of the Unlettered, what has he done?" We said, "He has come out from Makkah and settled in Yathrib." He said, "Do the Arabs fight him?" We said, "Yes." He said, "How did he deal with them?" We told him that he had overcome those in his vicinity and they had submitted to him. He said, "Has that actually happened?" We said, "Yes." He said, "If that is so then it is better for them that they should obey him. I will tell you about myself: I am the *maseeḥ* (the *Dajjaal*), and soon I

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[109] *Baysaan*: one of the cities of Palestine

[110] A fresh water lake in Palestine

[111] A town in the south of Syria

will be granted permission to emerge. I will emerge and travel throughout the earth, and there will be no city where I will not stay during forty days, apart from Makkah and Ṭeebah[112], for both are forbidden for me. Whenever I want to enter one of them, I will be met by an angel in whose hand is an unsheathed sword, who will bar my way. At every mountain pass there will be angels guarding it.'"

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, striking the minbar with his stick, 'This is Ṭeebah, this is Ṭeebah, this is Ṭeebah,' meaning Madeenah. 'Have I not told you similar things (about the *Dajjaal*)?' The people said, 'Yes.' [The Prophet (ﷺ) said:] 'I liked this account given by Tameem because it is in accordance with what I have told you about him (the *Dajjaal*) and Madeenah and Makkah. He (the *Dajjaal*) is in the Syrian sea (the Mediterranean) or the Yemeni sea (the Arabian Sea). No, on the contrary, he is towards the east, he is towards the east, he is towards the east,' and he pointed with his hand towards the east." She (Faaṭimah bint Qays) said: "I memorized this from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)."[113]

This hadith clearly indicates that Ibn Ṣayyaad was not the greater *Dajjaal*, and that the greater *Dajjaal* is being detained in some island in the sea. Perhaps, as some of the scholars have suggested, he is one of the devils who were detained by the Prophet of Allah, Sulaymaan (ﷺ), because it is unlikely that a human would remain alive for so long. And Allah knows best what is correct.

3 - The Descent of 'Eesa ibn Maryam (Jesus son of Mary)

Allah (ﷻ) has told us that the Jews did not kill 'Eesa ibn Maryam, even though they claimed to have done so, and the Christians

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[112] i.e., Madeenah

[113] Muslim, 4/2261, hadith no. 2942

believed them. The truth is that 'Eesa was not killed, but Allah made someone else look like him. He himself was taken up to heaven by Allah. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُم بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ﴿١٥٧﴾ بَل رَّفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٥٨﴾﴾

﴿...but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it appeared so to them the resemblance of 'Eesa [Jesus] was put over another man [and they killed that man], and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no [certain] knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely; they killed him not [i.e. 'Eesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)]: But Allah raised him ['Eesa (Jesus)] up [with his body and soul] unto Himself [and he is in the heavens]. And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise.﴾ *(Qur'an 4: 157-158)*

Allah (ﷻ) indicates in His Book that 'Eesa (Jesus) will descend at the end of time, and that his descent will be a sign that the Hour is close at hand:

﴿وَإِنَّهُ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ ... ﴿٦١﴾﴾

﴿And he ['Eesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)] shall be a known sign for [the coming of] the Hour...﴾

(Qur'an 43: 61)

And Allah (ﷻ) tells us that at that time the People of the Book will believe in him:

﴿وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ ... ﴿١٥٩﴾﴾

﴿And there is none of the people of the Scripture [Jews

> and Christians] but must believe in him ['Eesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), as only a Messenger of Allah and a human being] before his ['Eesa (Jesus) or a Jew's or a Christian's] death [at the time of the appearance of the angel of death]...﴿ *(Qur'an 4: 159)*

The meanings of these verses are explained in more detail in the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ). The Messenger (ﷺ) told us that when the *fitnah* of the *Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ) becomes too intense, and the believers are under pressure at that time, Allah will send down His slave and Messenger 'Eesa (عليه السلام). He will come down at the white minaret in the east of Damascus. Aṭ-Ṭabaraani narrated in *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer* that Aws ibn Aws reported: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Eesa ibn Maryam (Jesus, the son of Mary) will descend at the white minaret in the east of Damascus.'"[114]

The Messenger (ﷺ) has described how he will look when he descends. In *Sunan Abi Dawood* it is narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad that Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) related, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'There is no Prophet between me and 'Eesa (Jesus). He will descend. When you will see him you will know him. He will be a man of average build, with a reddish, whitish complexion. He will come down wearing two garments dyed with saffron, with his head looking as if it is wet although it will be not.'"[115]

(1) When will he descend

He will descend at a time when the Muslim fighters will have formed rows to pray *Fajr*, and their Imam will have stepped forward to lead

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[114] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/361, no. 8025. Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* as Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani said.

[115] *Ibid*, 5/90, hadith no. 5265

the prayer. That Imam will step back so that 'Eesa (Jesus) may come forward and lead them, but he will refuse. In the hadith it says, "Their leader (i.e., the leader of the Muslim army) will be a righteous man. When he will step forward to lead them in *Fajr* prayer, 'Eesa ibn Maryam will descend to them. That Imam will step back so that 'Eesa (Jesus) may come forward (to lead the prayer). 'Eesa will put his hand between his shoulders and say to him, 'Go forward and lead the prayer, for the *iqaamah* was said for you.' So their Imam will lead them in prayer."[116]

This will be at the time when the Muslims will be preparing to wage war against the *Dajjaal*. According to the hadith of Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) narrated by Muslim, "Whilst they will be preparing to fight and forming ranks, the time for prayer will come. 'Eesa ibn Maryam (Jesus, the son of Mary) will come down and lead them." The version in '*Kitaab al-Eemaan* says: "How will you be when the son of Maryam comes down among you and leads you?"[117] The meaning here is not that 'Eesa will lead them in prayer, because the first hadith indicates that 'Eesa will refuse to go forward, and he will tell the Imam for whom the *iqaamah* was said to go forward. A similar hadith from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) is narrated by both Bukhari and Muslim, in which he says, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'How will you be when the son of Maryam comes down to you and your Imam is from among you?'"[118]

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[116] Ibn Maajah, Ibn Khuzaymah and Al-Ḥaakim. Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. See *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/277

[117] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Fatḥ al-Qusṭanṭeeniyyah*, 4/2221, hadith no. 2897, also *Kitaab al-Eemaan, Baab Nuzool* 'Eesa ibn Maryam, 1/136, no. 155

[118] Bukhari, *Kitaab Aḥaadeeth al-Anbiyaa', Baab Nuzool* 'Eesa ibn Maryam, *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 6/491; Muslim, *Kitaab al-Eemaan*, 15/136, hadith no. 155

In Muslim it is narrated from Jaabir ibn 'Abdullah (ﷺ), that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

> "A group of my ummah will continue fighting for the truth and prevailing until the Day of Resurrection." He said, "Then 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam will come down, and their leader will say, 'Come and lead us in prayer.' He will say, 'No, one of you is the leader of others, as an honour from Allah to this ummah.'"[119]

(2) How will 'Eesa rule after he descends?

The texts quoted above clearly indicate that the Imam will be one of this ummah. The texts which say "he will lead you" or "he will lead them" - referring to 'Eesa (Jesus) - do not mean that he will lead them in prayer. What is meant is that he will judge among them according to the Book of Allah (the Qur'an), i.e., he will lead them according to the Book of Allah. According to the hadith of Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) narrated by Muslim, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> "How will you be when the son of Maryam (Mary) comes down and leads you as one amongst you?"

One of the narrators of this hadith, Ibn Abi Dhi'b, said to Al-Waleed ibn Muslim[120], "Do you know what 'and leads you as one amongst you' means?" He said, "Tell me." He said, "He will lead you according to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of your Prophet (ﷺ)."[121]

The reason why 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam will not step forward (to lead the prayers) indicates that he will come to follow this Prophet

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[119] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Eemaan, Baab Nuzool* 'Eesa, 4/137, no. 156

[120] He is the one who narrated this hadith from Ibn Abi Dhi'b.

[121] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Eemaan, Baab Nuzool* 'Eesa, 4/137, no. 156

(ﷺ), judging according to the Qur'an and not the Injeel (Gospel), because the law of the Qur'an abrogates all laws that came before it. Allah has taken the covenant from all the Prophets that they would believe in Muhammad (ﷺ) and follow him if he was sent whilst they were still alive:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَٰقَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ لَمَآ ءَاتَيْتُكُم مِّن كِتَٰبٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ
جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِۦ وَلَتَنصُرُنَّهُۥ قَالَ ءَأَقْرَرْتُمْ
وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُمْ إِصْرِى قَالُوٓا۟ أَقْرَرْنَا قَالَ فَٱشْهَدُوا۟ وَأَنَا۠ مَعَكُم مِّنَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ
﴿٨١﴾ فَمَن تَوَلَّىٰ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾﴾

﴾And [remember] when Allah took the Covenant of the Prophets, saying: 'Take whatever I gave you from the Book and *Ḥikmah* [understanding of the Laws of Allah], and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger [Muhammad] confirming what is with you; you must, then, believe in him and help him.' Allah said: 'Do you agree [to it] and will you take up My Covenant [which I conclude with you]?' They said: 'We agree.' He said: 'Then bear witness; and I am with you among the witnesses [for this].' Then whoever turns away after this, they are the *Faasiqoon* [rebellious: those who turn away from Allah's obedience].﴿ *(Qur'an 3: 81-82)*

'Eesa (Jesus) will descend as a follower of our Messenger (ﷺ) and will judge according to the laws of the Qur'an. Hence he will pray behind that righteous man. This is an honour to this ummah, and what an honour! According to the *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith narrated by Abu Sa'eed, the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

"From among us will be the one behind whom 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam (Mary) will pray." (Abu Na'eem *Kitaab al-Mahdi*).[122]

[122] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ Ṣagheer*, 5/219, hadith no. 5796

An-Nawawi refuted those who deny that 'Eesa will descend on the basis that if his descent were true it would contradict the words of the Prophet (ﷺ), "There will be no Prophet after me," and that the fact of his descent would abrogate the shari'ah of the Messenger (ﷺ). He (An-Nawawi) said: "This is a false deduction, because the descent of 'Eesa (ﷺ) does not mean that he will come down as a Prophet with laws to abrogate our shari'ah. There is no mention of any such thing in these *aḥaadeeth* or in others... But it is true that he will come down as a just ruler... ruling according to our shari'ah, and he will revive matters of our shari'ah neglected by the people (with the passage of time)."[123]

(3) 'Eesa (Jesus) will kill the *Dajjaal*

The first thing that 'Eesa will do will be to confront the *Dajjaal*. After 'Eesa comes down he will set out for *Bayt al-Maqdis* (Jerusalem) where the *Dajjaal* will be besieging a group of Muslims. 'Eesa will command them to open the gate. In *Sunan Ibn Majaah*, *Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Khuzaymah* and *Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim* it is narrated that Abu Umaamah related: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'When he will complete (the prayer), 'Eesa will say, "Open the gate." They will open it, and behind it will be the *Dajjaal*, accompanied by seventy thousand Jews, each of whom will be carrying an adorned sword. When the *Dajjaal* will see him, he will start to melt like salt in water and will run away. He will catch up with him at the eastern gate of *Ludd* (Lod), and will kill him. Then Allah will defeat the Jews...'"[124]

In Muslim it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) that the Messenger (ﷺ) spoke of the descent of 'Eesa and his praying with the believers.

[123] *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/76

[124] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/275, no. 7752

Then he said: "When the enemy of Allah sees him, he will melt like salt in water. If 'Eesa were to leave him alone he would melt away completely, but Allah will kill him at his hands, and he will show them his blood on his spear."[125]

The reason why the *Dajjaal* will start to melt is that Allah will give to 'Eesa's breath a special scent which, if a *kaafir* smells it, he will die from it. In Muslim there is a lengthy hadith from An-Nawaas ibn Sam'aan, in which it says that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Whilst he is like that, Allah will send the Messiaḥ (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary). He will descend at the white minaret in the east of Damascus, wearing two garments dyed with saffron, placing his hands on the wings of two angels. When he lowers his head it will drip, and when he raises it there will fall drops like pearls. No *kaafir* will smell the fragrance of his breath but he will die, and his breath will reach as far as his eyes can see. He will pursue him (the *Dajjaal*) until he catches up with him at the gate of *Ludd* (Lod), where he will kill him. Then 'Eesa will come to some people whom Allah has protected from him (the *Dajjaal*); he will wipe their faces and tell them of their status in Paradise."[126] The reason why 'Eesa will not leave the *Dajjaal* to die from his breath is so as to put an end to the myth and tribulation of this creature, for when the people see him being killed and that he is dead, they will realize that he was merely a weak person who was incapable, and that his claims were false and were lies.

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[125] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Fatḥ al-Qusṭanṭeeniyyah*, 4/2221, no. 2897

[126] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2253, no. 2937

(4) The mission of 'Eesa after killing the *Dajjaal*, and the destruction of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj

'Eesa (Jesus) will put an end to the *Dajjaal* and his *fitnah*, and Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog) will emerge during his time - as we shall see below - and will spread great mischief throughout the earth. 'Eesa will pray to his Lord, and He will respond. The next morning they will be dead, and not one of them will be left. At that time 'Eesa will devote himself to the great mission for which he came down, that is, to establish the rule of the shari'ah of Islam, and to put an end to misguided principles and deviant religions. In Bukhari and Muslim it is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) stated: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'By the One in Whose hand is my soul, soon the son of Maryam (Mary) will come down among you as a just ruler. He will break the cross, kill the pigs and abolish *jizyah*. Wealth will be so abundant that there will be no one to accept it, until one *sajdah* (prostration) will be better than this world and all that is in it.'"[127]

According to a report narrated by Muslim from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ): "I swear by Allah that the son of Maryam (Mary) will certainly descend as a just judge. He will definitely break the cross, kill the

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[127] One *sajdah* will be more beloved to any one of them than this world because of the great desire for goodness that they will have as a result of the certain faith which will fill their hearts when they see 'Eesa and the signs which come before him, which will alert them to the closeness of the Hour.

This is narrated by Bukhari in his *Saheeh, Kitaab Ahaadeeth al-Anbiyaa', Baab Nuzool 'Eesa ibn Maryam, Fath al-Baari*, 6/460; also in two other places; the first, *Kitaab al-Mazaalim, Baab Kasr as-Saleeb, Fath al-Baari*, 5/121, and the second, *Kitaab al Buyoo', Baab Qatl al-Khanzeer, Fath al-Baari*, 4/414; Muslim, *Kitaab al-Eemaan, Baab Nuzool 'Eesa*, 4/135, no. 155.

pigs and abolish the *jizyah*. He will leave the young she-camel and no one will endeavour to (collect *zakaah* on it). Spite, mutual hatred and jealousy against one another will certainly disappear and when he summons people to accept wealth, not even one will do so."[128] In Muslim, in *Kitaab al-Fitan*, there is a lengthy hadith narrated from An-Nawaas ibn Sam'aan, which mentions the *Dajjaal*, the descent of 'Eesa (Jesus) and the emergence of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog). At the end of this hadith, the Messenger (ﷺ) mentioned how 'Eesa will pray to his Lord when things become too difficult. Allah will respond, and will destroy Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj. Then he said: "Then the Prophet of Allah 'Eesa and his companions will come down, and they will not find even a handspan of earth that is not covered with their (Gog and Magog) bodies and their stench. 'Eesa and his companions will pray to Allah, and Allah will send to them birds with necks like *bakht*[129] camels, which will carry them and throw them wherever Allah wills. Then He will send rain, which no house or tent will be spared. It will wash the earth until it leaves it smooth as a mirror. Then it will be said to the earth, bring forth your fruits, bring forth your blessing. On that day, a group will eat from one pomegranate and will seek shade beneath its skin. Milk will be so blessed that a little camel's milk will be sufficient for a large group of people, a little cow's milk will be sufficient for a tribe of people and a little sheep's milk will be sufficient for a clan of people."[130]

(5) What we learn from the texts which speak of 'Eesa

(i) That 'Eesa (ﷺ) will undoubtedly descend at the end of time. The texts which state this are *mutawaatir*, narrated from the Messenger

[128] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Eemaan, Baab Nuzool 'Eesa*, 4/35, no. 155

[129] *bakht*: the camels of Khuraasaan, which have long necks

[130] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2254, no. 2937

(ﷺ).[131] Denying that 'Eesa will descend means denying something stated by the Messenger (ﷺ). What the Messenger (ﷺ) says is true, with no element of doubt in it. The Qur'an also refers to the descent of 'Eesa ibn Maryam (Jesus, the son of Mary) in more than one place, such as when Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِۦ ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا ﴾

﴾And there is none of the people of the Scripture [Jews and Christians] but must believe in him ['Eesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), as only a Messenger of Allah and a human being] before his ['Eesa (Jesus) or a Jew's or a Christian's] death [at the time of the appearance of the angel of death]. And on the Day of Resurrection, he ['Eesa (Jesus)] will be a witness against them.﴿

(Qur'an 4: 159)

Hence when Abu Hurayrah narrated the hadith about 'Eesa coming down as a just ruler[132], at the end of the report he said, "Recite, if you wish, ﴾And there is none of the people of the Scripture...﴿ *(Qur'an 4:159).*"[133]

(ii) That 'Eesa (Jesus) will come to establish the rule of the shari'ah of the Qur'an:

We have discussed this matter, and the evidence for it, above.

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[131] The Messenger urged those who meet 'Eesa to convey his *salaams* to him. In *Sunan an-Nasaa'i* it is narrated with a *saheeh* isnad from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah said: "Whoever among you meets 'Eesa ibn Maryam, let him convey my *salaams* to him."

[132] This hadith is narrated by both Bukhari and Muslim, as stated above.

[133] *Saheeh al-Jaami' as-Sagheer*, 5/226, no. 5877

(iii) He will put an end to all other religions, and no religion will be accepted from anyone except Islam.

For this reason he will break the cross, which is the symbol of deviant Christianity, and he will kill the pigs which were forbidden by Islam. He will abolish the *jizyah*; no *jizyah* will be accepted from any Jew or Christian, and nothing will be accepted from them except Islam. According to the hadith of Abu Hurayrah narrated by Abu Dawood, with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad going back to the Prophet (ﷺ), "He will fight the people until they become Muslim, then he will break the cross and kill the pigs, and abolish the *jizyah*. And during his time Allah will destroy all the religions apart from Islam."[134]

The fact that he will not accept *jizyah* does not mean that it is abrogated. The Messenger (ﷺ) stated that *jizyah* would be accepted until 'Eesa descends, after that it will not be accepted, and nothing will be accepted from the *kuffaar* except Islam. If any of them offers the *jizyah*, it will not be accepted from him; nothing will be accepted except Islam or death. This is also stated by Imam Abu Sulaymaan al-Khaṭṭaabi and other scholars... On this basis it might be said that this is different to the ruling of shari'ah that applies today, for if a *kitaabi* (one of the people of the Book) offers *jizyah* today, it is obligatory to accept it, and it is not permissible to kill him or to force him to become Muslim. The response to this is that the ruling will not remain in effect until the Day of Resurrection, rather it applies until 'Eesa (ﷺ) comes. The Prophet (ﷺ) has told us in these *ṣaḥeeḥ aḥaadeeth* that this will be abrogated, but that 'Eesa is not the one who will abrogate it. Rather our Prophet (ﷺ) is the one who stated that it will be abrogated, and that 'Eesa will rule according to our shari'ah.[135]

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[134] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami'*, 5/90, no. 5265

[135] *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 2/190

(iv) Widespread prosperity and prevalent peace and security at that time:

The texts that we have quoted speak of that great blessing which will exist at that time, and the immense peace and security with which Allah will honour His slaves during those days. Hatred and enmity among people will be removed, and people will unite in following the word of Allah. Among the texts which speak of this is the hadith of Abu Umaamah narrated by Ibn Maajah, Ibn Khuzaymah and Al-Ḥaakim with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad, in which he said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "Eesa ibn Maryam (Jesus, the son of Mary) will be a just ruler and a fair leader among my ummah. He will break the cross, kill the pigs, abolish the *jizyah* and forsake *ṣadaqah*. People will not need to strive to earn a sheep or a camel.[136] Hatred and enmity will be taken away. Every poisonous animal will have its venom removed, so that an infant will put his hand in a snake's mouth and will not be harmed, and a child may hurt a lion but it will not harm him, and the wolf will be like a sheepdog with the sheep. He will fill the earth with peace just as a vessel is filled with water. There will be unity and none will be worshipped but Allah, and there will be no more war. Authority will be taken away from Quraysh, and the earth will be like a silver tray. It will bring forth produce as it did at the time of Adam, a group of people will gather round one bunch of grapes and that will suffice them, and a group will gather around one pomegranate, and that will suffice them. A bull will be sold for such and such money and a mare will be sold for a few *dirhams*..."[137]

[136] i.e., they will not need to strive to earn provision

[137] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/276, no. 7752

(6) Good living after the Messiaḥ comes

The quality of life at that time, as described in the texts, will be something unique in the history of mankind, when people will live in goodness, security and peace, at a time of ease and plenty. They would live the enviable life with all the blessings. In the hadith it says: "How good life will be after the Messiaḥ comes, when the sky will be instructed to send down rain, and the earth will be instructed to bring forth its produce, so that even if you were to sow your seeds on smooth rocks, they would grow. A man will pass by a lion and it will not harm him, and he will step on a snake and it will not harm him. There will be no hatred, no envy and no spite."[138]

(7) 'Eesa's stay on earth

'Eesa (Jesus) will remain on this earth for forty years, as is proven in the *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith narrated in Sunan Abi Dawood from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ): "He will stay on the earth for forty years, then he will die and the Muslims will pray (the funeral prayer) for him."[139]

During that time he will establish the rule of Islam and pray facing the *Qiblah* of the Muslims. We have mentioned the *aḥaadeeth* which describe him praying behind that righteous man when he comes down. It is also reported that he will go on Pilgrimage to the Ancient House (the Ka'bah). In Muslim and Musnad Aḥmad it is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'By the One in Whose hand is my soul, the son of Maryam will certainly recite *La ilaaha illallah* in the valley of Rawhaa', performing Ḥajj or 'Umrah separately or together."[140]

[138] A *ṣaḥeeḥ hadith*, narrated by Abu Bakr al-Anbaari, Ad-Daylami and Ad-Diyaa' from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ). See *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 4/559, no. 1926

[139] *Ṣaheeh al-Jaami'*, 5/90, no. 5265

[140] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 6/100, no. 6955

Rawhaa' is a place between Madeenah and Wadi aṣ-Ṣafraa', on the way to Makkah, approximately forty or thirty-six or thirty miles from Madeenah.[141]

(8) The virtue of those who will accompany 'Eesa (ﷺ)

In *Musnad Aḥmad* and *Sunan an-Nasaa'i* it is narrated from Thawbaan that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "There are two groups among my ummah whom Allah will save from the Fire: the group which conquers India and the group which will be with 'Eesa ibn Maryam."[142]

4 - The Emergence of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog)

In *Soorat al-Kahf* Allah mentions that during his travels throughout the earth, Dhul-Qarnayn reached a place between two mountains, in front of which he found some people who could hardly understand anything. They complained to him of the harm caused to them by Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog), and they asked him to build a barrier between them, to protect them from their mischief. Dhu'l-Qarnayn responded to their request:

﴿حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا بَلَغَ بَيۡنَ ٱلسَّدَّيۡنِ وَجَدَ مِن دُونِهِمَا قَوۡمٗا لَّا يَكَادُونَ يَفۡقَهُونَ قَوۡلٗا ﴿٩٣﴾
قَالُواْ يَٰذَا ٱلۡقَرۡنَيۡنِ إِنَّ يَأۡجُوجَ وَمَأۡجُوجَ مُفۡسِدُونَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَهَلۡ نَجۡعَلُ لَكَ خَرۡجًا عَلَىٰٓ أَن
تَجۡعَلَ بَيۡنَنَا وَبَيۡنَهُمۡ سَدّٗا ﴿٩٤﴾ قَالَ مَا مَكَّنِّي فِيهِ رَبِّي خَيۡرٞ فَأَعِينُونِي بِقُوَّةٍ أَجۡعَلۡ بَيۡنَكُمۡ
وَبَيۡنَهُمۡ رَدۡمًا ﴿٩٥﴾ ءَاتُونِي زُبَرَ ٱلۡحَدِيدِۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا سَاوَىٰ بَيۡنَ ٱلصَّدَفَيۡنِ قَالَ ٱنفُخُواْۖ حَتَّىٰٓ
إِذَا جَعَلَهُۥ نَارٗا قَالَ ءَاتُونِيٓ أُفۡرِغۡ عَلَيۡهِ قِطۡرٗا ﴿٩٦﴾ فَمَا ٱسۡطَٰعُوٓاْ أَن يَظۡهَرُوهُ وَمَا
ٱسۡتَطَٰعُواْ لَهُۥ نَقۡبٗا ﴿٩٧﴾ قَالَ هَٰذَا رَحۡمَةٞ مِّن رَّبِّيۖ فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعۡدُ رَبِّي جَعَلَهُۥ دَكَّآءَۖ وَكَانَ

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141 *Lawaami' al-Anwaar al-Bahiyyah*, 2/113

142 *Ṣaheeḥ al-Jaami'*, 4/35, no. 3900

وَعْدُ رَبِّى حَقًّا ﴿٩٨﴾ ۞ وَتَرَكْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمُوجُ فِى بَعْضٍ وَنُفِخَ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَجَمَعْنَٰهُمْ
جَمْعًا ﴿٩٩﴾ ﴾

﴿Until, when he reached between two mountains, he found, before [near] them [those two mountains], a people who scarcely understood a word. They said: 'O Dhu'l-Qarnayn! Verily, Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj [Gog and Magog people] are doing great mischief in the land. Shall we then pay you a tribute in order that you might erect a barrier between us and them?' He said: 'That [wealth, authority and power] in which my Lord had established me is better [than your tribute]. So help me with strength [of men], I will erect between you and them a barrier. Give me pieces [blocks] of iron;' then, when he had filled up the gap between the two mountain-cliffs, he said: 'Blow;' then when he had made them [red as] fire, he said: 'Bring me molten copper to pour over them.' So they [Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog people)] could not scale it or dig through it. (Dhu'l-Qarnayn) said: 'This is a mercy from my Lord, but when the Promise of my Lord comes, He shall level it down to the ground. And the Promise of my Lord is ever true.' And on that Day [i.e. the Day Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog people) will come out], We shall leave them to surge like waves on one another; and the Trumpet will be blown, and We shall collect them [the creatures] all together.﴾ *(Qur'an 18: 93-99)*

Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog) are two nations which are great in number. They are from among the descendents of Adam (ﷺ), as it is narrated in Bukhari and Muslim: "Allah will say[143]: 'O

[143] i.e., on the Day of Resurrection

Adam!' He will say, 'At Your service.' Allah will say, 'Send forth those who are destined to Hell.' Adam will say, 'Who are those who are destined for Hell?' He will say, 'Out of every thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine to Hell and one to Paradise.' At that time the young child will turn grey and every pregnant female will deliver her load." He said, "And among you there are two nations who are never added to a thing but they overwhelm it - Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj." Ibn Katheer said, after quoting this hadith: "An-Nawawi narrated in his commentary on Muslim from some of the people that Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj were created from semen that was emitted by Adam and mixed with the dust, so they were created from that, and thus they are created from Adam but not from Ḥawwa'." But Ibn Katheer rejected this idea and denounced it, saying, "This is a very strange notion, and there is no evidence for it either in terms of common sense or in the reports that have been transmitted. In such matters it is not permissible to rely on the stories told by some of the People of the Book, because they have a lot of fabricated reports."[144]

Allah (ﷻ) has told us that the barrier built by Dhul-Qarnayn is preventing them from emerging: ﴾So they [Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog people)] could not scale it or dig through it.﴿ *(Qur'an 18: 97)* He said that this will continue until the end of time, when the Promise of Allah will come and they will be granted permission to emerge. At that time the barrier will be destroyed and they will emerge to mankind: ﴾...but when the Promise of my Lord comes, He shall level it down to the ground. And the Promise of my Lord is ever true.﴿ *(Qur'an 18: 98)*

When that happens, they will emerge in hordes, like the waves of the sea: ﴾And on that Day [i.e. the Day Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj [Gog and Magog people] will come out], We shall leave them to surge like

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[144] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 4/423

waves on one another...﴿ *(Qur'an 18: 99)*

This will be close to the onset of the Hour and the blowing of the Trumpet: ﴾...and the Trumpet will be blown, and We shall collect them [the creatures] all together.﴿ *(Qur'an 18: 99)*

Allah (ﷻ) tells us elsewhere that they will make a hole in the barrier and emerge:

﴾حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فُتِحَتۡ يَأۡجُوجُ وَمَأۡجُوجُ وَهُم مِّن كُلِّ حَدَبٖ يَنسِلُونَ ۝٩٦ وَٱقۡتَرَبَ ٱلۡوَعۡدُ ٱلۡحَقُّ فَإِذَا هِيَ شَٰخِصَةٌ أَبۡصَٰرُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ يَٰوَيۡلَنَا... ۝٩٧﴿

﴾Until, when Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj [Gog and Magog people] are let loose [from their barrier], and they swoop down from every mound. And the true promise [Day of Resurrection] shall draw near [of fulfillment]. Then [when mankind is resurrected from their graves], you shall see the eyes of the disbelievers fixedly staring in horror. [They will say:] 'Woe to us!...'"﴿

(Qur'an 21: 96-97)

This will indeed come to pass at the end of time. The phrase ﴾...and they swoop down from every mound.﴿ *(Qur'an 21: 96)* means they will hasten to spread corruption in the earth. A mound is a raised portion of land. This is how they will be when they emerge.

The Messenger (ﷺ) said that a small hole had opened in the barrier of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj during his time, a hole like a circle made with the thumb and forefinger. In Bukhari it is narrated from Zaynab bint Jaḥsh that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) visited her in an agitated state and said, '*Laa ilaaha illallah*! Woe to the Arabs for an evil that has approached! A hole like this has opened in the barrier of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj," and he made a circle with his thumb and forefinger. Zaynab said: "I said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, will we be destroyed

even if there are righteous people among us? He said, 'Yes, if evil is widespread.'"[145]

They will emerge after 'Eesa (Jesus) descends and the *Dajjaal* is defeated. In Muslim it is narrated in the lengthy hadith of An-Nawaas ibn Sam'aan that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> "Then 'Eesa ibn Maryam will come to people whom Allah has protected from him (i.e., from the *Dajjaal*). He will wipe their faces and will tell them about their status in Paradise. Whilst that will be happening, Allah will reveal to him: 'I have sent out some slaves of Mine, and no one will be able to fight them. Take My slaves to safety in *Aṭ-Ṭoor* (Sinai)[146].' Then Allah will send Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj, who will come pouring down from every high place. The first of them will pass by the lake of *Tabariyyah* (Tiberias)[147], and will drink it all up. The last of them will pass by it and will say, 'There was water here once.' The Prophet of Allah 'Eesa (ﷺ) and his companions will be besieged (in *Aṭ-Ṭoor*, and will be so hard-pressed) that the head of a bull would be dearer to any one of them than one hundred *dinars* is to any of you today. The Prophet of Allah 'Eesa (Jesus) and his companions will beseech Allah, and Allah will send upon them a worm in their necks, and in the morning they will all perish as one. Then the Prophet of Allah 'Eesa and his companions will come down and they will not find even a handspan of the earth, not filled with their putrefaction and stench. The Prophet of Allah 'Eesa (Jesus) and his companions will beseech Allah and He will send birds with necks like those of bakht camels[148], which will carry them and throw them

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[145] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Ya'jooj wa Ma'jooj, Fatḥ al-Baari*,13/106

[146] i.e., take them up into the mountain so that they will be safe

[147] a large fresh-water lake in Palestine

[148] Camels with long necks

> wherever Allah wills. Then Allah will send rain, which no house or tent will be spared, and which will wash the earth until it leaves it like a mirror."[149]

Another report narrated by Muslim adds, after the phrase "There was water here once": "Then they will travel on until they come to Jabal al-Khumr[150], which is a mountain in Jerusalem. They will say, 'We have killed those who are on earth, now let us kill those who are in heaven.' So they will shoot their arrows up into the sky, and Allah will send them back covered in blood."

According to the report of Ibn Ḥajar: "I have sent some slaves of Mine whom no one will dare to fight."[151]

The reason why no one will be able to stand against them is because of their large numbers. Their huge numbers are indicated by the fact that the Muslims will light fires from their weapons for seven years after they are destroyed. In *Sunan at-Tirmidhi* it is narrated with an isnad that is similar to those of the previous reports: "The Muslims will light fires from the bows and arrows of Ya'jooj, and their weapons and shields, for seven years." Also narrated by Ibn Maajah in his *Sunan*.[152]

These *aḥaadeeth* and the many similar reports indicate that this great civilization which has invented such powerful bombs and missiles will vanish. It is most likely that it will destroy itself, and mankind will return once more to using horses, spears, bows and the like. And Allah knows best.

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149 Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2254, no. 2937

150 *Al-Khumr* is a large, densely-leaved tree which covers (*yakhmur*) whatever is beneath it. It is explained in the hadith that it is *Bayt al-Maqdis* because there are many trees there.

151 Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Dhikr ad Dajjaal*, 4/2555, no. 2937

152 *Silsilat al Aḥaadeeth as-Ṣaheeḥah*, 4/579, no. 1940

In *Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Sunan ibn Maajah, Ṣaḥeeḥ ibn Ḥibbaan, Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim* and *Musnad Aḥmad* it is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) stated: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: 'Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog) are digging every day, until they can almost see the rays of the sun. Then the one appointed over them, will say, "Go back, and you can dig again tomorrow." Then Allah restores it and makes it stronger than it was before. (This will continue) until their time comes and Allah wills to send them against mankind. They will dig until they can almost see the rays of the sun, then the one who appointed over them will say, "Go back, and you can dig again tomorrow, *in sha Allah*" - so this time he will say *in sha Allah*. They will come back the next day and see the hole as they had left it. So they will dig, and will come out to mankind. They will drink up the water, and the people will hide from them in their strongholds. They will shoot their arrows up into the sky, and they will fall back down full of blood. They will say, "We have defeated the people of the earth and overwhelmed the people of heaven." Then Allah will send a worm in their necks, which will kill them.' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'By the One in Whose hand is my soul, the beasts of the earth will get fat from their flesh.'"[153]

In *Sunan ibn Maajah, Ṣaḥeeḥ ibn Ḥibbaan, Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim* and *Musnad Aḥmad* it is narrated that Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say:

[153] Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*. Al-Ḥaakim said concerning it: "It is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of the two shaykhs (i.e., Bukhari and Muslim)", and Adh-Dhahabi agreed with him. Al-Albaani said: it is as they said. *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 4/313, no. 1735

'The way will be opened for Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj to emerge upon mankind as Allah (ﷻ) says, ﴾...and they swoop down from every mound.﴿ *(Qur'an 21:96)*

They will overwhelm the earth, and the Muslims will retreat from them into their cities and fortresses, taking their flocks with them. They will drink up the water of the earth, until some of them will pass by a river and will drink it up, leaving it dry. Then those who will come after them will pass by that river and will say, 'There was water here once." Then when there is no one left except the people in their strongholds and cities, they will say, "We have finished with the people of the earth, now there remain the people of heaven." Then one of them will throw his spear up, and it will come back covered with blood, as a test and a trial. Whilst they are like that, Allah will send worms in their necks and they will all die without a sound. The Muslims will say, 'Is there not a man who will sacrifice himself, and see what the enemy is doing?" So one of them will go out, hoping for reward (from Allah) and they will think that he is going to die. He will go down and find them all dead, lying on top of one another. He will call out, 'O' Muslims, rejoice, for Allah has sufficed you against your enemy." They will come out from their cities and fortresses, and will bring their flocks out. Their flocks will have no other pasture but their flesh, and they will grow fat on them as if it were the best pasture of vegetation that ever grew."[154] These texts indicate how great in number Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj will be, so great that no one will be able to oppose them.

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[154] *Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth as-Saheehah*, 4/402, hadith no. 1793. Shaykh Naasiruddin mentioned that Al-Haakim said concerning it: 'it is *saheeh* according to the conditions of Muslim, and Adh-Dhahabi agreed with him.' But the Shaykh did not accept that, because Ibn Ishaaq was one of the narrators of the hadith, and Muslim narrated from him only as corroborating reports. So the hadith is *hasan.*

5 - The End of Islam, the Removal of the Qur'an and the Death of Good People

After Islam spreads far and wide, encompassing the east and the west, it will become weak once again and evil will become strong. This great religion will be taken away, the Qur'an will be removed and knowledge will vanish. Allah will take (in death) everyone in whose heart is any trace of faith, and after that none will be left but the most evil of creation, upon whom the Hour will come.

Ibn Maajah and Al-Ḥaakim narrated that Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamaan stated: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'Islam will wear out like the adornment of a garment wears out, until no one will know what fasting, prayer, sacrifice or charity are. The Book of Allah will be taken away in one night, and not one *aayah* will be left on earth. There will remain groups of people, old men and old women, who will say, 'We heard our forefathers saying this word, *Laa ilaaha illallah*, so we say it too.'"[155]

This small remnant, who will know nothing of Islam except the word of *Tawḥeed*, will pass away. In Muslim it is narrated that 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'The Hour will only come upon the most evil of creation.'"[156]

In another hadith, the Messenger (ﷺ) explained to us how the remnant of the righteous will pass away at the end of time. According

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[155] Al-Ḥaakim said: it is *ṣaḥeeḥ* according to the conditions of Muslim, and Adh-Dhahabi agreed with him. Al-Booṣayri said, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*, and its men are *thiqaat*. See *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, by Shaykh Naaṣiruddin al-Albaani, hadith no. 87

[156] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Qurb as-Saa'ah*, 4/2268, hadith no. 2949

to the hadith narrated by Muslim from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ), the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Allah will send a wind from Yemen, softer than silk, and it will not leave anyone in whose heart is an atom's weight of faith but it will seize him."[157]

It is narrated from Anas that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not begin until it is no longer said on earth, 'Allah, Allah.'"[158]

In Muslim, it is narrated from an-Nawaas ibn Sam'aan and attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ):

> "Whilst they are like that, Allah will send a good wind which will seize them beneath their armpits, and will take the soul of every believer and every Muslim. There will be left the most evil of people who will fornicate like donkeys, and upon them the Hour will come."[159]

Another of the ways in which Islam will disappear those days will be that Ḥajj will no longer be performed; there will be no Ḥajj and no 'Umrah. In *Musnad Abi Ya'laa* and *Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim* it is narrated with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad that Abu Sa'eed (ﷺ) stated: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

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[157] Muslim, hadith no. 7915. See *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/410

[158] Muslim. *Mishkaat al-Maṣaabeeḥ*, 3/50, hadith no. 5516

[159] Muslim, *Kitaab Dhikr ad-Dajjaal*, hadith no. 2937. What is meant by "they will fornicate like donkeys" is that a man will have intercourse with a woman in the presence of other people, like donkeys do, and they will not care about that. *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/70.

I say, this is how people are today in many western societies, where they fornicate like donkeys in their clubs, which are called nudist clubs, and on the beaches, and in forests and parks.

> 'The Hour will not come until there is no Ḥajj to the House.'"[160]

Undoubtedly this will happen after Allah sends that good wind which will take (the souls of) the righteous. But until then, worship at the House will continue. In Bukhari it is narrated that Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri stated: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'People will come on Ḥajj and 'Umrah to this House (even) after Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj emerge.'"[161]

6 - Mankind's Return to Ignorance and Idol-Worship

When Islam disappears and the Qur'an is taken away, and the soul of every person in whose heart is an atom's weight of faith is taken, mankind will return to their former state of ignorance, or an even worse state. They will obey the *Shayṭaan* and worship idols.

The Messenger (ﷺ) has told us what will happen after the death of 'Eesa (ﷺ) at the end of time. According to the hadith of 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr, narrated by Muslim: "Then Allah will send a cold wind from the direction of Syria, and no one will be left on the face of the earth who has an atom's weight of goodness or faith in his heart, but it will seize him (in death). Even if one of you were to enter into the heart of a mountain it would follow him, until it seized him. I heard that from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), who said,

> 'There will remain the most evil of people, who will be as careless as birds and with the minds of wild beasts. They will not appreciate any good or condemn any evil. The *Shayṭaan* will appear to them and say, "Will you not respond?" They will

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[160] *Saheeh al Jaami' as Ṣagheer*, 6/174, no. 7296

[161] Bukhari; See *An-Nihaayah* by Ibn Katheer, 1/186

> say, "What do you command us to do?" He will tell them to worship idols, but despite that they will have abundant provision and comfortable life. Then the Trumpet will be blown...'"[162]

Among the idols which will be worshipped will be Dhu'l-Khalaṣah, the false goddess of Daws, and *Al-Laat* and *Al-'Uzza*. In Bukhari and Muslim it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not come until the buttocks of the women of Daws move while going around Dhu'l-Khalaṣah, the idol which they used to worship during the *Jaahiliyyah*."[163]

In Muslim it is narrated from 'Aa'ishah that she heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, "Night and day will not cease until *Al-Laat* and *Al-'Uzza* are worshipped." 'Aa'ishah said, "O' Messenger of Allah, I thought that when Allah (ﷻ) revealed the words,

﴿هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُۥ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ ٱلْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلدِّينِ كُلِّهِۦ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾﴾

> ﴾It is He Who has sent His Messenger [Muhammad] with guidance and the religion of truth [Islam], to make it superior over all religions even though the *Mushrikoon* [polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah] hate [it].﴿ *(Qur'an 9: 33)*

- that (that promise) would be fulfilled forever." He said, "But that will be the case for as long as Allah wills. Everyone who has a

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[162] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Khurooj ad-Dajjaal*, 4/2258, no. 2940

[163] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Taghayyur az-Zamaan hatta tu'bad al Awthaan*. *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 13/76; Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab Laa taqoom as-Saa'ah ḥatta ta'bud Daws Dhal-Khalaṣah*, 4/2230, hadith no. 2906. This version is narrated by Bukhari. The definition of Dhul-Khalaṣah is narrated in both *Ṣaḥeehs*.

mustard-seed's worth of faith in his heart will die, and there will remain those in whom there is no good, and they will return to the religion of their forefathers."[164]

At that time, moral standards will deteriorate dramatically. It is narrated by Al-Bazzaar in his *Musnad*, and Ibn Ḥibbaan in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*, that 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr stated: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

> 'The Hour will not come until the people commit fornication in the streets like donkeys." I said, "O' Messenger of Allah, will that really happen?" He said, "Yes, it will really happen." There is a corroborating report narrated by Al-Ḥaakim from Abu Hurayrah, who attributed it to the Prophet (ﷺ): "By the One in Whose hand is my soul, this ummah will not cease to exist until a man has intercourse with a woman in the street, and the best of them at that time will be the one who will say to them, 'Why don't you go and do it behind this wall.'"[165]

There is another corroborating report in the lengthy hadith of an-Nawaas ibn Sam'aan about the *Dajjaal* (Pseudo-Christ) and Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj (Gog and Magog), at the end of which it says: "Whilst they are like that, Allah will send a good wind which will seize them beneath their armpits, and will take the soul of every believer and every Muslim. There will be left the most evil of people who will fornicate like donkeys[166], and upon them the Hour will come." This is narrated by Muslim, Aḥmad and Al-Ḥaakim.

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[164] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab laa taqoom as-Saa'ah ḥatta ta'bud Daws Dhal-Khalaṣah*, 4/2230, no. 2906

[165] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 1/245

[166] i.e., a man will have intercourse with women in the presence of other people, just as donkeys do

7 - The Destruction of the Ka'bah by *Dhul-Suwayqatayn*

Maybe this is the time when *Dhul-Suwayqatayn* will destroy the Ka'bah. According to the hadith narrated by Imam Aḥmad in his *Musnad* from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ), the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace be upon him) said:

> "Allegiance will be given to a man between the *Rukn* and the *Maqaam*[167], and no one will violate the sanctity of House except those who will be living there. When they violate it, then do not ask about the destruction of the Arabs. Then the Abyssinians will come and destroy it and it will never be rebuilt. They are the ones who will extract its treasure."[168]

Imam Aḥmad also narrated in *Al-Musnad* from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

> "The Ka'bah will be destroyed by *Dhul-Suwayqatayn* from Abyssinia. He will rob it of its adornments and take away its covering. It is as if I can see him, bald and with distorted wrists and ankles, striking with his shovel and pick-axe."[169]

In Bukhari and Musnad Aḥmad it is narrated from Ibn 'Abbaas that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "It is as if I can see him, black and pigeon-toed, destroying it stone by stone, that is, the Ka'bah."[170]

In Muslim it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

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[167] i.e., *Ar-Rukn al-Yamani* (the Yemeni Corner of the Ka'bah) and *Maqaam Ibraaheem* (the Station of Ibraaheem). (Translator)

[168] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 1/245

[169] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 2/119, hadith no. 479

[170] Ibn Katheer said in *An-Nihaayah* (1/187), its isnad is *qawiy*.

> "The Ka'bah will be destroyed by *Dhul-Suwayqatayn* from Abyssinia."[171]

He is called *Dhul-Suwayqatayn* because his calves will be small. *Suwayq* is the diminutive of *saaq* (calf), referring to their thinness. This is a feature which is common among black people.

It may be asked, how will he destroy it when Allah has made Makkah a secure sanctuary? The answer is that He has made it secure until just before the Hour and the end of this world. This is the view of An-Nawawi, and there is no contradiction (between its being a sanctuary and its being destroyed by *Dhul-Suwayqatayn*) because the destruction will happen at that time (i.e., at the end of the world). Apart from that, the ruling that it is a sanctuary is still in effect. (If an enemy seeks to attack it and violate its sanctity), Allah may prevent him as He did in the case of Abrahah, or He may not prevent him for some reason which is known to Him, as happened in the case of the Qaraamiṭah who attacked the Sanctuary (of Makkah) and committed atrocities therein, and as this evil Abyssinian *Dhul-Suwayqatayn* will do.

8 - The Rising of the Sun from the West

Among the clear signs which will point to the onset of the Hour will be the rising of the sun from the west. In Bukhari it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> "The Hour will not come until the sun rises from the west. When it rises and the people see it they will all believe, but that will be the time when faith will not benefit a person if he did not believe before, or did not derive any good from his

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[171] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan*, 4/2232, hadith no. 2909, *Sharḥ an-Nawawi 'ala Muslim*, 18/35

faith."[172]

9 - The Emergence of the Beast

This beast will be one of the Signs of Allah which will emerge at the end of time, when evil will be prevalent and corruption will be widespread. Goodness will be scarce at that time. This Beast will be the one mentioned by Allah:

﴿ ۞ وَإِذَا وَقَعَ ٱلْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَآبَّةً مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ ٱلنَّاسَ كَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ ﴾

﴾And when the Word [of torment] is fulfilled against them, We shall bring out from the earth a beast for them, to speak to them because mankind believed not with certainty in Our *Aayaat* [Verses of the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad].﴿ *(Qur'an 27: 82)*

Undoubtedly this Beast will differ from what people know of beasts. For example, it will address the people and speak to them. We have mentioned a number of *ahaadeeth* in which the Messenger (ﷺ) counted as one of the major signs of the Hour, the emergence of the Beast.

It is narrated by Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad,* Bukhari in *Al-Kabeer,* and Al-Baghawi in Hadith 'Ali ibn al-Ja'd and Abu Na'eem in *Akhbaar Isbahaan* with a *saheeh* isnad from Abu Umaamah and attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ): "The Beast will emerge and will mark the people on their noses. Then those who are marked will live among you until a man buys a camel and will be asked, 'From whom

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[172] Bukhari, *Kitaab ar-Riqaaq, Fath al-Baari,* 11/352; Muslim, *Kitaab al-Eemaan, Baab Bayaan al-Zaman alladhi laa yaqbal Allahu fihi al-Eemaan,* 1/37, hadith no. 157.

did you buy it?' He will say, 'From one of those who are marked on the nose.'"[173]

10 - The Fire which will Gather the People

The last sign which will appear before the Hour begins will be a fire which will emerge from the bottom of '*Aden* and will drive the people towards their place of gathering. We have quoted above the *aḥaadeeth* in which the Messenger (ﷺ) listed the portents of the Hour. He stated that they are ten, "and the last of that will be a fire which will emerge from Yemen and drive the people towards their place of gathering."[174]

In Bukhari it is narrated from Anas (ﷺ) that 'Abdullah ibn Salaam heard that the Prophet (ﷺ) had come to Madeenah (i.e., at the time of his Hijrah). He came to him and asked him about some things. He said, "I will ask you about three things. What will be the first sign of the Hour?" The Messenger (ﷺ) said,

> "The first sign of the Hour will be a fire which will gather them from the east to the west."[175]

In *Sunan at-Tirmidhi* it is narrated that 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) stated: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'There will emerge fire from Ḥadramawt before the Hour begins, which will gather the people.' The people said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, what do you command us to do?' He said,

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[173] *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 1/31, no. 322

[174] Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan, Baab al-Aayaat allati takoon qabl as-Saa'ah*, 4/2225, no. 2901

[175] If you want to see the rest of the questions and the answers given by the Messenger (ﷺ), please refer to Bukhari, *Kitaab Manaaqib al-Anṣaar, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 7/272

> 'You should go to Syria.'" Tirmidhi said, this is a *ṣaḥeeḥ ḥasan hadith*.[176]

The Messenger (ﷺ) has told us about how this fire will gather the people. In Bukhari it is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said: "The people will be gathered in three ways: those who have the hope (of Paradise) and fear (of punishment); those who will come riding two on a camel, or three on a camel, or four on a camel, or ten on a camel; and the rest of them will be gathered by the fire which will stop with them when they take a siesta during the day and will stop with them when they stop for the night, and will be with them wherever they are in the morning and wherever they are in the evening."[177] It is narrated by Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, Tirmidhi in his *Sunan* and Al-Ḥaakim in his *Mustadrak* with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad from Mu'aawiyah ibn Ḥaydah who stated, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> 'You will be gathered walking and riding and panicking towards this direction,' and he pointed with his hand towards Syria."[178]

The last ones whom the fire will gather will be two shepherds from (the tribe of) Muzaynah. According to the hadith narrated by Bukhari, Muslim and Aḥmad from Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), he said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say,

> 'The people will leave Madeenah in the best state it has ever been in, and none will inhabit it except the wild birds and beasts of prey. The last people to be gathered will be two shepherds from (the tribe of) Muzaynah who will be driving their sheep towards Madeenah, but they will find it deserted.

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[176] *Jaami' al-Uṣool*, 10/368, hadith no. 7888. See *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 3/203, hadith no. 3603

[177] Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Riqaaq, Baab al-Ḥashr, Fatḥ al-Baari*, 3/377

[178] *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 2/272, no. 2298

> When they reach *Thaaniyat al-Wadaa'*, they will fall down dead on their faces."[179]

The land towards which the people will be gathered is Syria. In *Kitaab Faḍaa'il ash-Shaam* by ar-Raba'i it is narrated from Abu Dharr with a *ṣaḥeeḥ* isnad that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Syria is the land of gathering and the resurrection." This is narrated by Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, Ibn Maajah in his *Sunan* and ar-Raba'i in *Faḍaa'il ash-Shaam* from Maymoonah bint Sa'd.[180]

Some scholars thought that this gathering would take place in the Hereafter. Al-Qurṭubi attributed this view to Al-Ḥaleemi and Abu Ḥaamid al-Ghazaali.[181]

Al-Khaṭṭaabi, Aṭ-Ṭeebi, Al-Qaaḍi 'Ayaaḍ, Al-Qurṭubi, Ibn Katheer and Ibn Ḥajar thought that this gathering would happen at the end of this world, when the fire will emerge from the bottom of *'Aden* and the people will be gathered to Syria.[182]

Ibn Katheer said, concerning these *aḥaadeeth*: "These quotations indicate that this gathering will be the gathering of those who will be present at the end of this world, will be driven from all regions to the place of gathering, which is Syria. They will be in three groups: One group will be gathered fed, clothed and riding; another group will be walking sometimes and riding sometimes, taking turns to ride one camel, as stated in *Aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥayn* (Bukhari and Muslim), 'two on a camel, or three on a camel, or four on a camel, or ten on a camel', i.e., they will take turns riding because of the lack of transportation, as stated above and as explained in the other hadith; and the rest of them (the third group) will be gathered by the fire, that will emerge

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179 *Silsilat al-Aḥaadeeth aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥah*, 2/302, no. 683

180 *Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami' aṣ-Ṣagheer*, 3/232, no. 3620

181 *At-Tadhkirah* by Al-Qurṭubi, p. 198-199, *Fatḥ al-Baari*, 11/379

182 *Fatḥ al-Baari; At-Tadhkirah*, p. 200

from the bottom of *'Aden*. It will surround the people from behind and drive them from all sides to the land of gathering. Whoever among them will lag behind, it will consume him.

All these reports indicate that this will take place at the end of this world, because food, drink and transportation are mentioned, and those who lag behind will be consumed (killed) by the fire.

If this were to happen after the trumpet-blast of the resurrection, there would be no death or riding-beasts, no food or drink, and no clothing in the arena of judgement. It is strange indeed that al-Ḥaafiẓ Abu Bakr al-Bayhaqi, after narrating most of these *aḥaadeeth*, interpreted that as referring to the Day of Resurrection, regarding that view as correct and the view that we have mentioned as being weak. He quoted as evidence for that the *aayah*:

﴿يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ وَفْدًا ﴿٨٥﴾ وَنَسُوقُ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وِرْدًا ﴿٨٦﴾﴾

﴿The Day We shall gather the *Muttaqoon* [the pious] unto the Most Gracious [Allah], like a delegation [presented before a king for honour]. And We shall drive the *Mujrimoon* [polytheists, sinners, criminals, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah] to Hell, in a thirsty state [like a thirsty herd driven down to water].﴾ *(Qur'an 19: 85-86)*

How can he think that this is true when he is quoting the hadith to explain the *aayah* in which it says, 'two on a camel, or three on a camel, or four on a camel, or ten on a camel'. It clearly states that there will be a lack of riding beasts? This hadith does not fit with this *aayah*. And Allah knows best. The *aayah* is referring to animals from Paradise which the believers will ride from the arena of judgement to Paradise. That situation will be completely different."[183]

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[183] *An-Nihaayah* by Ibn Katheer, 1/259

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SYMBOLS' DIRECTORY

(﷾) : *Subḥaanahu wa Ta'aala* - "The Exalted."

(ﷺ) : *Ṣalla-Allahu 'Alayhi wa Sallam* -
"Blessings and Peace be upon him."

(عليه السلام) : *'Alayhis-Salaam* - "May Peace be upon him."

(رضي الله عنه) : *Raḍi-Allahu 'Anhu* - "May Allah be pleased with him."

GLOSSARY

Ahaadeeth	أحاديث	:	Sing. Hadith. Record of the sayings and deeds of and silent approval by the Prophet.
Ahl adh-Dhimmah	اهل الذمة	:	Non-Muslims living under Islamic rule and protection.
Ahad	أحد	:	One.
Aayah	آية	:	Pl. *Aayaat.* Verse, proof, lesson, revelation, evidence.
'Aqeedah	عقيدة	:	Creed, basic tenets of faith.
Abraar	أبرار	:	The pious, the righteous. The pious believers of Islamic Monotheism.
Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah	أهل السنة والجماعة	:	The majority of the believers (Muslims) who stick to the Sunnah of the Prophet.
Ahl al-Bayt	آهل البيت	:	The members of the Prophet's family.
'Adhaab	عذاب	:	Torment.
'Asr	عصر	:	Afternoon, time, afternoon prayer.
Amaanah	امانة	:	Honesty, trust, faith. The moral responsibility, all the

			duties which Allah has ordained.
Ameer al-Mu'mineen	امير المؤمنين	:	The commander of the believers, the title used for the Caliph; Caliph, *Emir* of the believers.
Bayt al-Maal	بيت المال	:	Treasury of the Islamic state.
Barzakh	برزخ	:	Lit. Barrier. Phase between death and the Day of Resurrection.
Barakah	بركة	:	Abundance and continuance of divinely bestowed good.
Al-Bayt al-Ma'moor	البيت المعمور	:	The Holy House over the heavens parallel to the Ka'bah at Makkah, continuously visited and circumumbulated by the angels.
Bayt al-Maqdis	بيت المقدس	:	*Bayt al-Maqdis* is the famous mosque in Jerusalem regarded as the third sacred mosque in the Islamic world; the first and second being *Al-Masjid al-Ḥaraam* (the Grand Mosque) at Makkah and the mosque of the Prophet at

			Madeenah, respectively.
Birr	بر	:	Piety, Righteousness.
Baaṭin	باطن	:	Hidden.
Ḍa'eef	ضعيف	:	Weak; also a term in hadith discipline for a hadith report, being weak for a number of reasons in its chain of narrators.
Daff	دف	:	Tambourine.
Dajjaal	دجال	:	Pseudo-Christ, false claimants of Messiaḥ and Prophethood.
Dhul-Qarnayn	ذو القرنين	:	Lit. Man with two horns. A great ruler in the past who ruled all over the world, and was a true believer. His story is mentioned in the Qur'an (18:83).
Daleel	دليل	:	Evidence, proof.
Dhikr	ذكر	:	Lit. Remembrance. Remembering Allah as prescribed in the Qur'an and/or the sunnah.
Dinaar	دينار	:	An Islamic coin, nowadays a currency in Kuwait, 'Iraq, Baḥrain, Sudan, Yemen, Algeria, Libya and others.
Eemaan	إيمان	:	Faith, belief.

Fajr	فجر	:	Dawn; Dawn prayer.
Fiqh	فقه	:	Islamic jurisprudence. The understanding and application of Shari'ah.
Faqeeh	فقيه	:	Islamic jurists.
Faasiqoon	فاسقون	:	Sing. *Faasiq*. Liars, rebellious, disobedient to Allah.
Fatwa	فتوى	:	Legal opinion from a juris - consult (*mufti*). Islamic verdict on certain issue/s by jurist/s.
Fawaaḥish	فواحش	:	Sing. *Faaḥishah*. Shameful sins, illegal sexual acts, obscene.
Fiṭrah	فطرة	:	Nature, natural inclinations of mankind, natural religion (Monotheism).
Fujjaar	فجار	:	Sing. *Faajir*. Disobedient, disbelievers, wrongdoers.
Fitnah	فتنة	:	Trial, affliction, persecution, confusion in the religion, conflicts and strives among the Muslims.
Ghayb	غيب	:	Unseen, invisible, also future.
Ghulul	غلول	:	Taking from the booty without legal right. Taking

			from the war booty by stealth before it is distributed.
Ḥajj	حج	:	Fifth pillar of Islam. Pilgrimage to Makkah, performed in the month of Dhul Ḥijjah. It is obligatory once in lifetime on every adult and sane Muslim who can afford to do so.
Ḥaraam	حرام	:	Forbidden by Shari'ah, illegal.
Ḥayy	حي	:	The Ever-Living, An attribute of Allah.
Haawiyah	هاويه	:	A bottomless pit, name of Hell. The pit of Hell.
Ḥasan Ghareeb	حسن غريب	:	A term in hadith discipline, good hadith though narrated by one person.
Hijrah	هجرة	:	Migration of the Prophet and the Companions from Makkah to Madeenah; Migration for the sake of Allah.
al-Ḥoor al-'Een	الحور العين	:	*Ḥouris*; Beautiful heavenly maidens created for the people of Paradise.
Ḥuroof Muqaṭṭa'aat	حروف مقطعات	:	Abbreviated letters, used in several chapters of the Qur'an.

Iblees	إبليس	:	Satan, Devil.
Iḍaafah	إضافة	:	Addition.
Iḥsaan	إحسان	:	Full faith, faith per excellence, fulfillment of the good that is required by God, perfection of faith.
Ijmaa'	إجماع	:	Consensus of the Companions/Successors on certain issue/s; Agreement of Islamic jurists on certain legal issue/s.
'Ishaa'	عشاء	:	Night; Night prayer.
Imaam	إمام	:	Leader of prayer; leading scholars like Imaam Abu Ḥaneefah, Imaam Bukhari, also a Caliph.
Insaan	إنسان	:	Mankind, human being, man.
Isnaad	إسناد	:	Attribution to a chain of hadith narrators.
'Illiyyeen	عليين	:	The register of righteous deeds.
Iqaamah	إقامة	:	Call to prayer, similar to the *adhaan*, called immediately before the congregational prayer, second call for prayer.
Jizyah	جزية	:	Head-tax imposed by Islam

			on non-Muslims living under the protection of an Islamic government.
Jumaada al-Aakhir	جمادى الآخر	:	The sixth month of the Islamic calendar.
Jaahiliyyah	جاهلية	:	Lit. Ignorance. The ignorance era before Islam, Pre-Islamic era; any non-Islamic custom etc.
Jihaad	جهاد	:	Lit. Struggle or striving. Any act of striving to please Allah; also holy war.
Jumu'ah	جمعة	:	Friday, the Muslim day of weekly gathering when men have to go to the mosque to hear the *khuṭbah* and pray the congregational prayer. (Attendance is optional for women).
Kalaam	كلام	:	Speech; articulation; theology.
Kaafir	كافر	:	Plural: *Kuffaar*. Disbeliever in Islam and Islamic tenets.
Kharaaj	خراج	:	*Zakaat* imposed on the yield of the land.
Khaleefah	خليفة	:	Lit. One who succeeds another; deputy; vicegerent mankind; Successor of the Prophet. Specifically, it

			refers to the early Muslim rulers, Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmaan and 'Ali.
Kitaabi	كتابي	:	One of the people of the Book, a Christian, a Jew.
Khuṭbah	خطبة	:	Speech, address or sermon, especially delivered on Friday and *'Eed* day and at the time of *Nikaḥ* (marriage).
Lauḥ Maḥfooẓ	لوح محفوظ	:	The Preserved Tablet; the book that is in the heaven with Allah wherein everything is written. Every happening is Pre-recorded in it.
Laa ilaaha illallah	لا إله إلا الله	:	There is no god but Allah. The fundamental declaration of *tawḥeed*, the central tenet of Islam.
Laylat al-Qadr	ليلة القدر	:	The Night of Decree. The "Night of power," one of the odd-numbered nights of the last ten days of Ramaḍaan. The Qur'an describes it as "better than a thousand months" (Qur'an 97:3).
Maghrib	مغرب	:	Sunset, evening prayer (*Ṣalaat*).

Malḥamah	ملحمة	:	A fierce battle.
Mawt	موت	:	Death.
Minbar	منبر	:	Pulpit, the steps on which the Imam stands to deliver the *khuṭbah* on Friday prayers.
Mu'allaq	معلق	:	A term in hadith discipline for a chain of narrators not connected to the Prophet.
Mufassir	مفسّر	:	Qur'anic exegete, a scholar who comments and explains the meanings of the Qur'an. like Ibn Katheer, Sayyid Qutub, Ṭabari, Zamakhshari, Qurṭubi, Mawdudi, etc.
Mujrimoon	مجرمون	:	Sing. *Mujrim.* Criminals, wrongdoers, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners.
Muqaddimah	مقدمة	:	Introduction; introduction of a book; name of a book written by Ibn Khaldoon.
Mushrik	مشرك	:	Pl. *Mushrikeen.* Polytheist, one who associates others in worship with Allah, the disbelievers in Islamic Monotheism.
Munkir	منكر	:	Evil deeds; disbelief, polytheism, every deed that

is bad; abominable; something hateful or evil.

Muttaqoon متقون : Sing. *Muttaqi*. Pious and righteous persons who fear Allah much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which he has ordained).

Mutawaatir متواتر : A term in hadith discipline for a hadith narrated through various chain of narrators.

Mutakallifoon متكلفون : Sing. *Mutakallif*. Those who pretend and fabricate things which do not exist; who pretend to say things that are not true, or declare as facts things that do not exist; who take upon themselves tasks to which they are not equal

Munaafiq منافق : Pl. *Munaafiqoon*. The hypocrite (i.e. one who outwardly professes faith while concealing disbelief in his heart). One who pretends to believe in Islam,

			but does not.
Nafs	نفس	:	Soul; carnal self.
Sajdah	سجدة	:	Prostration.
Qaṣr	قصر	:	A fort; shortening of prayer units in *Ẓuhr*, *'Aṣr* and *'Ishaa'* while on travel.
Qaaḍi	قاضي	:	Judge. Judge in a shari'ah court.
Al-Qiyaamah aṣ-Ṣughra	القيامة الصغرى	:	The Minor Resurrection.
Al-Qiyaamah al-Kubra	القيامة الكبرى	:	The Greater Resurrection i.e., the Day of Resurrection.
Qiblah	قبلة	:	Direction for prayer i.e., Ka'bah in Makkah to which all Muslims turn their faces in *Ṣalaah*.
Rabaab	رباب	:	A stringed instrument of music.
Rajab	رجب	:	The seventh month of the Islamic calendar.
Ribaa	ربا	:	Usury, interest.
Rooḥ	روح	:	Soul, spirit.
Ṣaḥeeḥ	صحيح	:	A term in hadith discipline for sound, authentic and most reliable hadith report.
Ṣawm	صوم	:	Fasting: obligatory in Ramaḍan / voluntary on

			other days; i.e., not to eat or drink nor have sexual relations from the *Adhaan* of the *fajr* prayer till the sunset. One of the five pillars of Islam.
Shaheed	شهيد	:	Pl. *Shuhada'*. Martyr; a Muslim killed in the battle-field fighting for the cause of Allah.
Shari'ah	شريعة	:	Islamic law; A collective name for all the laws of Islam.
Shahaadah	شهادة	:	Lit. Testimony; Testimony of faith, "I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.
Sha'baan	شعبان	:	The month before Ramaḍaan; the eight month of Islamic calendar.
Ṣaḥaabah	صحابة	:	Sing. *Ṣaḥaabi*. The Prophet's Companions.
Ṣiddiqeen	صديقين	:	Sing. *Ṣiddeeq*. Those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them (like Abu Bakr).
Sijjeen	سجين	:	The register of evil deeds.

Salaf	سلف	:	The first three generations of Muslims, particularly, the Companions, and the Successors (the generation following the Companions).
Ṣalaah	صلاة	:	Prayer, obligatory/ voluntary; Invoking God's blessings; the prescribed form of prayer in Islam, the Islamic ritual prayer offered five times daily.
Salaam	سلام	:	Greeting, peace, saying *as-salaam 'alaykum*.
Tahleel	تهليل	:	Saying: *Laa ilaaha illallah* i.e., there is no true god but Allah.
Takbeer	تكبير	:	Saying: *Allahu Akbar* i.e., Allah is All-Great.
Tannoor	تنور	:	A kind of oven.
Ṭoor	طور	:	Name of a mountain in Sinai area.
Wali	ولي	:	Pl: *Awlia'*. Protector, Helper, Supporter, Guardian, Associate, Friend, Saint.
Yaqeen	يقين	:	Perfect and absolute faith. Conviction.
Ẓaalimoon	ظالمون	:	Sing. *Ẓaalim*. Polytheists, wrongdoers, oppressors.

Zakah	زكوة / زكاة	:	An annual obligatory prescribed charity (or poor due) by a Muslim in possession of riches, merchandise, agricultural produce, livestock, trading goods etc. over a prescribed limit - a certain minimum called *niṣaab*. A pillar of Islam. Rate of payment varies according to the kind of possession. Details to be found in *Fiqh* books. Way of distribution to be found in the Qur'an 9:60..
Zaahid	زاهد	:	Ascetic.
Zinaa	زنا	:	Adultery, fornication.

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Note: The above given reference nos. of hadith are from the CD programme "Hadith Encyclopedia" by Harf Information Technology.

TRANSLITERATION CHART

أ	a
آ . ى	aa
ب	b
ت	t
ة	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word)
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ

ظ	ẓ
ع	'
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
هـ — ه — ـه	h
و	w
و (as vowel)	oo
ي	y
ي (as vowel)	ee
ء	' (Omitted in initial position)

ـَ	Fatḥah	a
ـِ	Kasra	i
ـُ	Ḍammah	u
ـّ	Shaddah	Double letter
ـْ	Sukoon	Absence of vowel



What happens after death? When will the end of the world be? Are we really living in the "last days"? These are questions which concern everyone, no matter what his or her background. Many have tried to answer these questions, producing theories that range from the fanciful to the nihilistic. But man-made notions cannot answer questions about matters which man has no way of finding out by himself.

In these as in so many other issues, Islam brings us answers. Surely the One Who gives life and takes it away, is the One Who is the best to inform us of what happens after death. The One Who has created this universe and mankind is the best to tell us about when this world will come to an end and mankind will be called for Judgement. He has informed us about these matters, in His Book and through His Prophet (pbuh).

In this book, Dr. 'Umar S. al- Ashqar examines all these issues from the point of view of the Qur'an and Sunnah. He looks at issues of death and what happens to a person's soul after death, including the questioning of the angels and the torment of the grave. He also examines the signs of the Hour, which indicate that the Day of Judgement is approaching - many of which are already happening. As always, he quotes extensively from the texts, placing these issues squarely within an Islamic framework and dispelling the myth and misunderstandings that have arisen and become prevalent.

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